The Bystander Christmas Number, November 27, 1916

The BYSTANDER

Discovered !

A Christmas Caution by the Editor.

Christmas Wishes —Limited

I wish you a thrifty Christmas. and a carefully restricted New Year. May your Zepp. blinds and your food prices never go up, or your spirits down, if you're smart enough to have been able to obtain, or to keep, any. May your Yule gas, if you can afford to turn it on this Christmas, burn as brightly as is consistent with economy and the lighting regulations. May your thoughts, this Yule-tide, be concentrated, and your speech cautious. God help you merry gentleman if anything you *say*. May you fill up the day's official papers with flowing hand, and if you put a little extra barley into the water with which you toast the King—well, it will be Christmas, and perhaps the Drink Dictator will let you off with a fine.

They May be the Last

Of course this—or, perhaps, next—Christmas BYSTANDER may be the last Christmas BYSTANDER. There may be no more Christmases and no more BYSTANDERS, and no more anything. They may all have been concentrated to death, combed into eternity. Paper, for one thing, will be wanted. Every person—male, female, infantile—every cat, dog and canary being likely to be compelled to fill up about a dozen forms a day, stating precisely why he, she, or it lives and has breath, there will be little paper left for the purposes of instructing, and, with difficulty, amusing said creatures. Besides, they will have no time to read anything else but their daily budget of forms. As for amusement, given the sense of humour the said forms are likely, by their delicious touches, to satisfy all requirements.

Forms, Forms, Forms

As with paper, so with ink. Our King and country needs it. The war must be won. The issuing of forms is the approved way of winning it. In the first instance, a form must be drafted, and this means that ink must be used. *Ergo*, ink is a munition, and any man keeping a single pot of blue-black that could be better used up by the young Ministers (and their Ministresses) at the Carlton, the Ritz, the Savoy, Ciro's, the Leicester Lounge, or any other annexe of the Ministry of Munitions of Christmas, 1917, will deserve any form of death that may be considered suitable.

Combed While Standing By

The composition of a Christmas Number involves the expenditure of a certain amount of brain tissue. The Government will get to know that. One day next summer, while strolling in the spacious parks of the Hotel Métropole, or feeding the statues in the ponds of the ex-Constitutional Club, the Ministers will hear the voice of the Bystander muttering to himself "Christmas! Turkeys! Plum-puddings! Waits! Waits! Plum-puddings! Turkeys! Christmas!" "Good voice, that fellow," Mr. George will remark. "Yes. Much better be using it saying 'Right turn! Left turn! About turn!'" "Comb him," will say Mr. George, and combed we shall be, though bald as a billiard ball.

No Jokes by Next Christmas

A man who failed to repeat to himself the words mentioned could never produce a Christmas number. He couldn't get the blinking atmosphere. He might produce some sort of a number, but to do that he would need certain accessories, among them hewers of copy and drawers of jokes. Of these, I doubt the existence by next Christmas. All the copy-writers—skilled critics of the international situation, experts in the science of war and the art of diplomacy—will be engaged in cleaning combs, or some other suitable light duty, at the Trocadero, the Café Royal, Murray's, or some other newly annexed outwork of the Ministry of War.

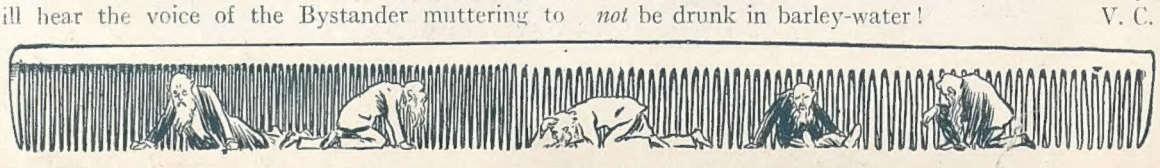
Laughter is Too Dangerous

As for the joke-artists, ha! ha! I wish that theirs will have been a merry Christmas this year, for it will be their last right enough; 1917 is to be a year of Dictators, that is clear. There will be Dictators of everything, and when we have twenty-three of them there will be a Committee of Dictators to inquire into the dictations of the Dictators. Let not the joke-artist think that jokes will remain undiscovered by the official eye. There will be a Joke Dictator. The prospect of a prolonged war means that every source of national energy must be conserved. Laughter strains certain important muscles; merriment detracts from the full understanding of the day's forms. Besides, hist! Has it occurred? The unseen hand? What easier method of conveying to the enemy valuable information than a joke drawing? I studied many of these in the course of this year's Christmas search, and came to the conclusion that they were hieroglyphics, not to say signals, intended for the understanding of Berlin, not for mine.

"Christmas, 1917"

However, no matter how many Dictators we may have to endure between now and next Christmas—if any—we will endure them provided only they include among their number a Dictator of Peace Terms to the Court of Berlin. Then the boys will come home in their millions, to dictate a Merry Christmas such as has never before been celebrated since the Prince of Peace came into the world. Our toast, therefore, is: "Christmas, 1917"; and may it *not* be drunk in barley-water!

V. C.



A Dollarous Look-out

"Reckon this darned stockin' ain't goin' to last me much longer!"

Her Day Off

THE DUDE: "I'm sure I've met you before. I remember your face, don't you know"
THE DAMSEL: "Yes. I took your excess fare on the Tube last night"

A Xmas Letter from "Blanche"

"I drink your health, everyone of you—in barley water, I *don't* think"

LONDON, 1916.

DEAR COUSIN—

DEAR all my cousins everywhere, by sea and land and air—merry Christmas! There's a war on, I know—a dreadful, awful war—but in these

spacious days of glory and of grieving

one must laugh that one may not weep; and at the appointed times be cheerfuller than ever, if possible—so's to forget and to help the rest to forget, and perhaps, too, to prove that we at home here in easy, sheltered England, can stick it as cheerily as even those martial men of ours, whose motto is: "Eat, drink, dance, and be merry, for to-morrow we go battle-fighting," though "there are times, my Blanche," as they say, 'when war is just too damnable."

⁂ ⁂

AND so I wish you a merry Christmas, and drink your health, every one of you—in barley-water, I *don't* think! Absent friends will be the toast of toasts this third war Christmas. Absent friends who'll come back to us again, and those dear, gallant ones who won't, who for us and England

. . . laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene
That men call age; and those who would have been
Their sons they gave, their immortality.

⁂ ⁂

AND here's a "step" to every one of them, stars and stripes and crowns and crosses and medals, and a "cushy" one, and a Staff-billet-for-a-good-boy. And after it's all over tender hands to bind their wounds, and bright eyes and

. . . cheeks that burn
To greet them when they return,

and someone who's "the goods" to say such wonderful things to you, and *such* a lot of wonderful things to do.

⁂ ⁂

AND may we never forget what even the least of them has done for us:

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

But human memories are short as a winter's day, and there'll be all the irony of life, won't there, when in the whirligig of time our hero of the Somme, the Aisne, the Marne, doer-in of half a hundred horrid Huns, is transformed and translated into—say, a henpecked husband?

(Continued on page 16)

"The world is still made quite obviously for Tempy, Sec. Lieuts."

A XMAS LETTER FROM BLANCHE *(continued from page 15)*

AND before this poor dear, sad, but rather nice old tank we call the world has caterpillared itself round to yet another Christmas—may we see the first faint signs, anyway, of life as it used to be. As the first of our fallen soldier-poets wrote:

> . . somewhere afar,
> Some white tremendous daybreak. And the light,
> Returning, shall give back the golden hours,
> Ocean a windless level, Earth a lawn
> Spacious and full of sunlit dancing-places,
> And laughter and music and, among the flowers,
> The gay child-hearts of men.

⁂ ⁂

SOMETIMES doesn't seem as if things ever *could* be quite as lovely ever again as that, does it? But, of course, they will; in fact, now that we know what stuff we Britishers are really made of, men and women—our men, heroes all (war-profiteers and their kind excluded); our women, splendid (with just a few exceptions)—in a way we'll be happier still. We shall be so proud. Pride's a great help to happiness—on earth if not in Heaven. And some help, I'm afraid, will be needed. For after such a very bloody battle we shall some of us, quite surely, be very, very poor—in sons and lovers and brothers, if not in purse.

"Trade's booming in Christmas pr sents"

⁂ ⁂

RATHER looks, too, as if there won't be quite so much for us to be a little bit ashamed of when we've cleared the war up. I mean, all those young men, for instance, one met at the dancing-tea places and those appalling people, the stage-knuts; if they *do* all rise up again knutty and unashamed after the war—well, we'll have to think of a new name for them, won't we? To call them men will be absurd, and to call them women an insult—to women. Though, of course, as to these last, I suppose we'll always have our share of the kind of fluffy things who, at the National Gallery, would see only the reflection of themselves in the glass, and always prefer the darker sort of pictures in consequence.

⁂ ⁂

APROPOS, talking of fluff, I *rather* like, don't you, this little story about tact that I found in that delightful publication, the 3rd London General's *Gazette*. An officer was talking about the necessity of tact to some N.C.O.'s recommended for commissions. He observed a slightly supercilious smile on the face of one, and afterwards called him up and asked him why. "Well, you see, sir," said the sergeant, "about tact. Some years ago when I was the Colonel's orderly I opened the bathroom-door as usual one morning, expecting to find the Colonel there. Instead, there was his daughter just getting into the bath. So I banged the door to and shouted: 'Beg your pardon, *sir!*' And you talk to me about *tact!*"

⁂ ⁂

AND this from the same store. Patient to sister who has dressed a fractured limb with great care for many days as he watches the operation: "Ain't *our* leg getting on a treat, Sister!" While my M.O. readers will like this:

> When you think that you'll take forty winks and you hear that blessed bell,
> When you answer it and some sweet voice says, "Will you go to L?"
> When you 've cantered off to L right quick and they think it may be Z,
> When you find they don't want you at all and you might have stayed in bed,
> When all your pals have gone E.F. about the world to roam,
> When you've done your best to follow them but you've got to stop at home,
> When you get the hump and wonder what the end of it will be,
> Buck up. Remember it's your job. Carry on as an M.O. (T.)

⁂ ⁂

BUT about Christmas, the season of peace and goodwill (except towards Huns)—they say trade's booming in Christmas presents, and though food's a ruinous price, I wonder how many of us will eat much fewer or much simpler things than we usually do on this festive occasion? For one thing, the younger generation must make merry if there *is* a war, and for another—after all, why not? There's only one thing to do in this beastly war, and that's to keep one's end up, and grin. And one can do both better if we carry on with the good old customs in the good old way, and just for an hour or two, at any rate, *pretend* that there isn't a cataclysm.

⁂ ⁂

CHRISTMAS comes but once a year, too, thank good——I mean, doesn't it? So another little drink won't do us any harm, and as for me I could quite enjoy it, in spite of everything, if they'd only—

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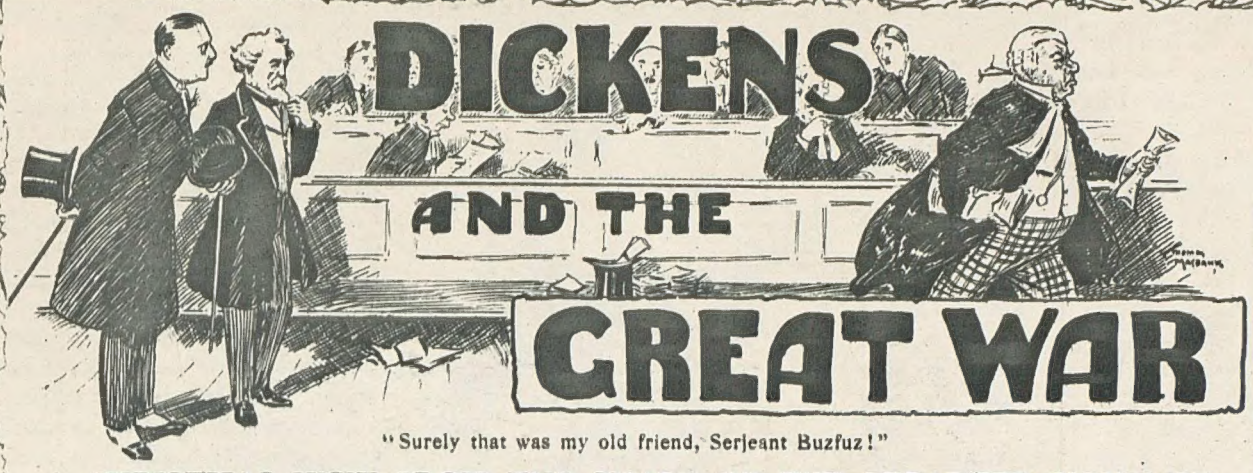
1914—1916

WAR'S TRANSMUTATIONS

His "Cushy" Job

OFFICER (recognising old schoolmate): "Great Scott! Carruthers. How on earth did you get that job?"

PTE. CARRUTHERS: "Oh!——influence!"



"Surely that was my old friend, Serjeant Buzfuz!"

A CHRISTMAS VISIT FROM THE SHADE OF THE DEPARTED NOVELIST

BY VIVIAN CARTER. *Illustrated by THOS. MAYBANK*

I DREAMED one night that I was being tried for treason or something, and awoke to find that I was. Counsel in a crowded and enthusiastic court had just set forth the nature of my offence.

"Pictures," he exclaimed, "funny pictures, m'lud. And in the third year of war. British soldiers depicted in the act of consuming—yes, m'lud, it's here in black and white—of consuming a beverage called rum! (Deep murmurs.) I ask you, could anything be more infamous, be more calculated to encourage our Army—I mean, m'lud, our enemy. But this paper, m'lud, is a desperate case. Not only does it depict soldiers as—ah—partaking of the beverage (deep cries of "Ah!") which I will not again offend your ears by naming, but it represents them as sometimes using language—profane exclamations—that would not be used, m'lud, in this court, and as complaining about the fruits from which their jams are made, while in one case an officer—an officer of the King, m'lud—is shown using positively blasphemous language about that noble orb and giver of nocturnal luminence, the moon. I think enough has been said to prove that this paper—this wicked shameful paper ——."

When the case had concluded, with the usual fines and costs, I became conscious as I passed out of the court of a little elderly gentleman at my elbow, who wore a longish grey-black beard, and whose face seemed strangely familiar to me.

"Excuse me," he whispered to me, "but surely that was my old friend, Serjeant Buzfuz."

"Your old friend? Certainly not. His name is Sir Blankey Brown, K.C., M.P. Buzfuz is as dead as Dickens."

"I *am* Dickens," said the little man, "and as it's Christmas time I've just been looking around some of my old haunts. You fellows speak of the season as my sort of special copyright, you know. I came here chiefly to find out if the case of Jarndyce *versus* Jarndyce is still proceeding."

"Oh, that's been adjourned *sine die*," I replied. "All the lawyers are now engaged in the conduct of the case of England *versus* Germany."

"Indeed! An international lawsuit, I presume?"

"Well, I've heard it referred to as a *war*, but some people do say that the lawyers who're running it treat it rather as a law-suit. They look on it through—ahem—through Jarndyced spectacles, as it were.

"The Germans used to be thought a formidable enemy in my days. Are they so still?"

"Pretty well. But, then, we have a wonderful Government, Mr. Dickens. There's the Cabinet of twenty-two members, and the War Council, and the Ministry of Munitions, the Imperial Staff, the Committee of Defence, and the Air Board, and the Man-Power Distribution Board, and we have committees on food supplies, and war savings, and trade after the war, and committees to deal with any muddles that have taken place like Gallipoli, and Mesopotamia, and Ireland."

"Dear me," said Dickens. "I wonder if I really am dead. Do you know, that seems to me to be exactly how we should have managed a war in the days I used to write my books about."

We strolled a little way towards the Strand, and Dickens regarded with horror the vast open space

(Continued on page 20)

"Mr. Simon Tappertit is a terrible fellow nowadays, with his threats against officialdom. He has a new victim every week"

"DICKENS AND THE GREAT WAR" (continued from page 19)

that was formerly the heart of London—Dickensland. "I don't suppose," he said, "I should find any of my old characters still about if I looked for them."

"Your characters? If I remember rightly, sir, your occupation was that of delineator of human nature, of weaknesses and foibles and humours. You have evidently not heard that we have a Defence of the Realm Act, some Orders in Council, a Press Censor, Liquor Control Regulations, Early Closing, and the Bishop of London. If any of your friends are not in gaol, under one or other of the Acts, they must indeed be dead."

Dickens sighed, "Ah, well! If I may venture to quote my friend Mr. Toots, it's of no consequence."

"Ah! Mr. Toots," I said. "Wonderful the way that fellow's got on, isn't it, and solely because of the masterful way in which he used to say: 'It's of no consequence' on all occasions and sundry."

"What's he doing, then?" asked Dickens.

"Doing? Why he was Under-Secretary to one of the greatest departments of the Government, and had to reply to heaps and heaps of questions, and gave always exactly the same answer. When they were tired of him at last he was got rid of."

"Dismissed?"

"Oh dear, no! Ministers are *never* dismissed. He was given a more remunerative post."

"As what?"

"It's of no consequence," I said. They 'combed' him out and saved themselves a lot of trouble"

"What do you mean by trouble nowadays?"

"Well, chiefly leading articles in Mr. Simon Tappertit's papers. You've heard, I daresay, that he's really a terrible fellow nowadays, with his threats against officialdom. He has a new victim every week. But they seem to stick to their jobs all the same, I'm afraid, and will as long as they suit the Prime Minister."

"What might be *his* name, pray?"

"Mr. Wilkins Micawber, of course, who's quite sure something will turn up if we all wait and see long enough.'

We found ourselves transported with dream-like swiftness to an open locality which I contended was Aldershot, but Dickens insisted was Salisbury Plain.

"Mr. Wilkins Micawber, the Prime Minister who's quite sure something will turn up if we all 'wait and see' long enough"

"I know it's Salisbury," said Dickens, "and if there were any doubt about it the presence of Tom Pinch there would set it at rest. You remember—he used to live with Pecksniff. Ah, Tom!" said Dickens, going up and greeting an old-young man in mufti, "how's Pecksniff?"

"Funny you should ask that question, sir. That is the hoot of Mr. Pecksniff's car just coming away from church, where he reads the lessons as beautifully as ever. A very fine car, sir, is it not?"

A Rolls-Royce swept by, amid a blinding cloud of dust, and seated inside it, with one of the Misses Pecksniff on either side—both very expensively dressed—was Mr. Pecksniff smoking a cigar, the fragrance of which was delightful to the nostrils.

"What is he doing in the great war?" asked Dickens, with a look of obvious disgust on his face, "or rather, I should say, whom is he doing?"

"When he isn't serving the country as a counsellor of morality and virtue he's a War Office contractor. But whatever others may say about Mr. Pecksniff, to me he is always Mr. Pecksniff. He always gives me a beautiful tract when he's time to speak to me—all about the wickedness of war."

Dickens snorted.

"To change the subject, how's Mark Tapley these days?"

"Ah, you must mean Colonel Mark Tapley, C.B."

"Splendid fellow! At the front, I suppose?"

"Well no, sir, not exactly. But he's coming out as jolly as ever, all the same, as the leading military critic in our Sunday papers. You simply can't depress him, Mr. Dickens. Everything that happens is for the best with Mark. When we have to retreat, Mark writes simply columns and columns to prove

"Mr. Pecksniff is a War Office contractor—when he isn't serving as a counsellor of morality"

that it's all part of a carefully planned trap for the enemy. He simply delights in defeats, sir, which are always 'strategic retirements' and 'masterly manœuvres.'"

"You simply can't depress Mark Tapley. He says we shall be across the Rhine next week"

"And when we advance?"

"Well, sir, then they simply can't control Mark. If we take Dead Pig Farm, he says we shall be across the Rhine next week, while if we advance on Vin Ordinaire we shall be marching through Berlin at Christmas. Wonderful jolly fellow, Mark. Everybody loves him, and his papers sell in millions."

We were interrupted by the passage of a pleasant, but rather distracted-looking old gentleman, in whose hands there waved in the breeze a long scroll of paper.

"Why, if it isn't Mr. Dick," said Dickens, delightedly. "As mad-looking as ever. And that's the memorial, I suppose, with King Charles's head cropping up all through it, as usual?"

"It certainly is Mr. Dick, sir. But that isn't the memorial. It's the proofs of next month's issue of the *Rabid Review*, which he writes all himself. Wonderful patriotic journal, sir. Everybody's a traitor, and it's full of revelations about the Unseen Hand. It isn't King Charles's head that crops up all through it, but Lord Haldane's. You know, of course, sir, about that shocking man who sold us to the enemy, and is still in daily touch with a notorious Hun agent named Schopenhauer. Mr. Dick simply can't leave him alone."

"Full of chatty information, that fellow," said Dickens, as we fled back to London, "and as loyal as ever to everybody and everything."

"There's lots like him," I said. "So trustful, so confiding. Which is helpful, of course, to people like Pecksniff, who simply abound."

In one of the West End streets Dickens recognised a young wounded officer.

"Why, it's Nicholas Nickleby. My dear Nicholas," he said, gripping the astonished youth by the arm. "No need to ask what you've been doing with that strong right arm of yours that gave that scoundrelly Squeers such a—such a ——."

"Strafing," laughed Nicolas. "No. It's done in a few of Squeers's fellow-countrymen, too, thank goodness."

"Squeers's fellow-countrymen? I don't follow. You haven't been killing Englishmen?"

"My dear sir, you've been out of the world, surely. Didn't you know that Baron von Squeers—Schkvihrs, as they spell it—became a naturalised Prussian years ago, and established Dotheboys Halls all over Germany to implant the true Squeerian kultur and no restrictions under the patronage of a truly Squeerian Government."

"And what got him his barony, pray?"

"Why, the splendidly Squeerian way in which he has been managing the British war prisoner camps at Dothebrutes Hall—otherwise Doberitz. The Prussians simply idolise him."

Nicholas joined us in our further stroll, during which Dickens asked him whether Mantalini was still alive, and what doing.

"Come this way," said Nicholas, leading us.

We paused outside the house, and Nicholas signalled to us to listen to the sounds that came from within. They were sounds as of a tensely emotional scene, between the cries of the woman there being heard the voice of a man.

"I will be a Tommy," he said. "A dem'd damp, moist, unpleasant Tommy. I'll go at once and——."

"It is Mantalini," said Dickens. "Threatening to do something really desperate at last, if his wife won't pay his latest bills. Listen."

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"I will be a Tommy. A dem'd damp, moist, unpleasant Tommy"

"DICKENS AND THE GREAT WAR" (concluded from page 21)

"I'll leave the house at once, and I'll go and ——."

More screams from Mrs. Mantalini.

"I'll go and get put on garrison duty at home, and I'll wear a dem'd armlet. There."

Further conversation was drowned in the cries of feminine anguish that rent the air.

"My ownest own," said the voice of Mantalini. "I knew you would. My essential juice of plum and apple. I *won't* be a Tommy. I'll wait till I'm called, demn it, and I'll then apply for exemption as the sole support of a wife, and if that won't do I'll go and see Uriah Heep, the secretary of the Anti-Military League, and get him to swear that I've got a dem'd conscience."

"Oh, yes, Heep's doing splendidly. You can always hire a conscience, for tribunal purposes, any time if you apply to him for one. He deals in 'em."

"That reminds me," said Dickens, "of another old humbug—Turveydrop. You remember, the professor of dancing, whose son did all the work of the establishment while he did all the deportment."

"The son," I remarked, "poor fellow, was one of the earliest casualties at the war."

"Bless my soul," said Dickens. "You don't say he was ever allowed to join up?"

"He wasn't allowed. He got so exhausted doing all the old man's work that he ran away one night, and enlisted to get a rest. Since his death, Mr. Turveydrop senior has been doing quite well, however. He gets a lot of fashionable sympathy as a result of the tearful eloquence with which he announces, while he beats his breast, that he gave his beloved son to the country."

"By the way," asked Dickens, "would I be likely to find Scrooge at home if I called this Christmas?"

"I doubt it, I said. "He's one of the busiest of war workers—specially concerned in dealing with applications for pensions. Your ghost would have to get up jolly early to make any change in him just now. In his capacity he saves the Government a lot of money."

"Baron von Squeers became a naturalised Prussian years ago . . . has been managing the British war prisoner camps"

"H'm," said Dickens. "Well, before we retire I suppose we must look up David Copperfield."

"Ah, Captain Copperfield, joined up early in the war, same time as Nicholas Nickleby, Martin Chuzzlewit, and all the other youngsters, and—I'm sorry to have to say—he was killed in action at Mons."

"And Mrs. Copperfield—Agnes?"

"Ah! Owing to not being able to collect her pension she's living on charity at present—Miss Trotwood's taken care of her."

"Good old Betsy," said Dickens. "And do the donkeys still congregate on her green?"

"Ah, my dear Mr. Dickens. The green was built over long ago. It's at present the sessions house of one of the local tribunals. But Miss Trotwood still persists in calling out "donkeys" when she passes, insisting that there are donkeys there still. In fact, sir, she will have it that there are nothing else but donkeys everywhere."

"Dear me," said Dickens, in what sounded like a ghostlike whisper, "and having been on earth for several hours, I've a notion that she isn't very far wrong."

When I looked round, I found that my companion had vanished into thin air. Dickens had evidently found Christmas in war-time far too Dickensian to be endurable.

VIVIAN CARTER

"Uriah Heep's doing splendidly. You can always hire a conscience, for tribunal purposes, at any time"

A Home-Bred Son of Empire

OVERSEAS C.O. : "And from what part of our great Empire do you come, my lad?"
TOMMY (proudly and emphatically): "Peckham, sir"

Rhododendrons

BY "CASUALTY" (CAPTAIN A. E. GLYDE)

THE bushes rose above the tennis-net, a perfect blaze of glory—dazzling white and tender pink, thrilling heliotrope and faintest blue.

"I love them," said the Girl, "the rhododendrons. I think they are the sweetest flowers in the world."

Perhaps it was the beauty of the flowers in front of them, or the splendour of the summer sky overhead, but her voice trembled as she said it.

"I shall never forget them," the Boy replied.

For some time they watched in silence the tennis match that was being played on the court which separated them from the flaring bushes. The thudding of the balls upon the turf seemed to echo the fast beating of their hearts.

"Will they really send you out to the front again?" she asked at length.

"I'm supposed to be patched up again; I've been passed fit for active service for two months now. And I'm top of the list for going out, you know," he said.

"But what a shame! you've done your 'bit' so well. Why can't they leave you alone, and send out somebody who's never done anything, instead of making men like you go out two or three times?"

"That's all the bigger compliment to us," he replied. "We've got to keep the flag flying."

"When you first came here I hoped they'd never send you away again. You were so ill. . . ." She was almost crying now. ". . . Oh, it will be dreadful if you go away."

"Don't talk about it, please," he entreated; "it makes it so much worse for me to think you mind. . . . But I'll come back some day. . . . I'll come back when the rhododendrons are in flower once again. And I'll take you away with me."

"I shall always be waiting," she replied.

The tennis set was finished, and, rising from their chairs, they strolled towards the bushes.

"Lovely flowers," she murmured, burying her flushed face amongst the petals. "In all the whole garden they are the purest and sweetest."

"But they last the least time of all," he said.

. . . . . .

"'E's done for, pore kid," muttered a soldier, looking down upon the motionless form stretched on the firing step of the trench. "Right through 'is 'ead 'e stopped it."

"'E was one of the best, 'e was," replied his companion. "It don't 'ardly seem right. . . ." His voice trailed off into silence.

"'Ere, what's 'e sayin', Bill? 'E's mumbling summut abart drums. . . . rhod. . . . den. . . . drums. What's them, Bill?"

"Why, doncher know? Them flowers wot grows at 'ome."

. . . . . .

Father and daughter were walking on that same tennis-lawn one dewy morning in August. But of the flaring beauty of June not one blossom remained.

"All the rhododendrons are gone," he said with a sigh. "Lovely flowers for a fortnight, and then nothing but quiet bushes for all the rest of the year. It hardly seems worth while."

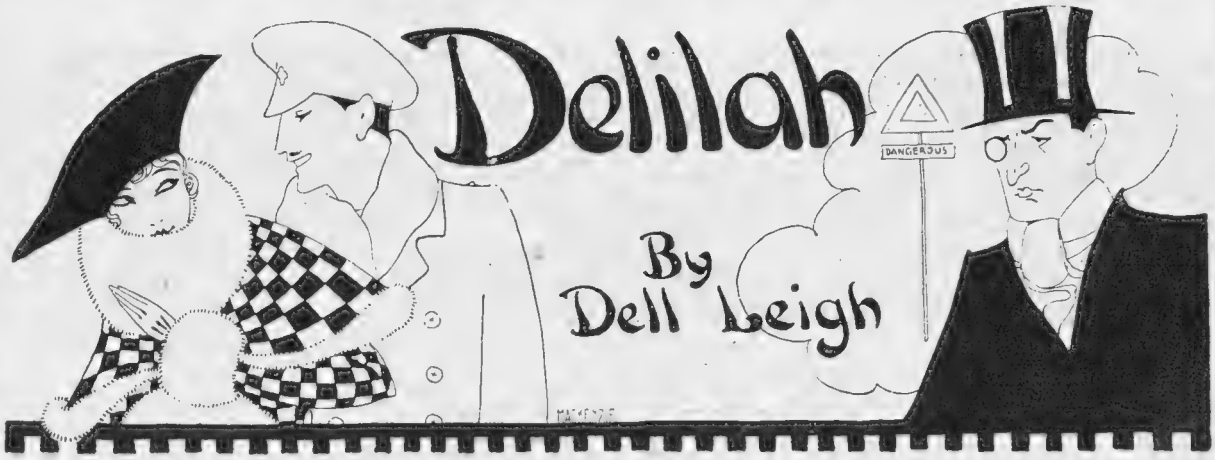
"I suppose life is just like that," was her reply. She turned her face away from him, and squared her shoulders. "But it is worth it," she said.

"Carrying On"

To do her work she bravely tries,
Though figures blur before her eyes;
Plucky her boy—her boy that's gone,
But pluckier she who "carries on."

Little Miss Christmas

THE LATEST—AND PLEASANTEST—SUBSTITUTE FOR "MAN-POWER"



Delilah III

By Dell Leigh

A STORY OF THE UNEXPECTED

"Of course it sounds a rotten thing to say, and all that, but, somehow, I always distrust women with foreign accents in these days. What?"

The fifth Earl of Saxmundham studied the wrapper on his cigar absently, and yawned.

Hunter's hand wandered to his moustache, behind which the ghost of a smile hovered. Saxmundham was very young and insular. They were waiting for their two ladies in the Lounge at the Savoy, sitting in the deep chairs.

They attracted some attention. Saxmundham because of the vastness of his estates and the deep scar which ran diagonally across his cheek, a legacy from Le Cateau. And Major Hunter because of the red tabs on his service jacket and his handsome tanned face.

"What did you think of the aunt?" asked Hunter in a bored voice.

"Oh, usual kind of superfluous *chaperon*," replied Saxmundham, "waste tissue in these enlightened days, I call 'em."

The two men were scarcely more than chance acquaintances—a meeting bred of mutual sea-sickness on the leave boat, cemented at dinner in the train to town. They had dined and theatred twice together in the last two days, and Saxmundham had heroically consented to make a fourth at dinner that night to meet "a perfectly charming woman." He had sat agog at her brilliancy throughout the meal, and, as Hunter shrewdly suspected, his post-prandial assertions upon her motives were merely the prattlings of cock-sure youth.

"I say, old chap," said Saxmundham, "as they said something about driving us home, drop me at the Marlborough, will you. I must write a couple of letters to-night. And be careful, Hunter, she's foreign, and—well, you're at the War Office, you know. Can't be too cautious. Look out, here they come."

Estelle Ferrière appeared, fastening a fur coat about her chin. An elder woman walked beside her sedately. Women standing about ceased talking as she passed, and stared in that cold, insolent manner peculiar to the times, for she was more expensively dressed than any of them.

She walked with the carriage of the Latin and the calm assurance of the Anglo-Saxon. Her clear skin and dark hair were thrown into high relief by the lighting and furniture of the place; and when she smiled as she approached Hunter her face was really beautiful.

He rose eagerly.

"Have we been an age?" she addressed them both. "I'm so sorry. You will let us give you both a lift, won't you?"

By the time they had dropped Saxmundham in Pall Mall the aunt was sonorously dozing to the low hum of the big Daimler. Estelle leant back and sighed.

"I *have* enjoyed it so," she said. And he could see her smiling at him in the gloom.

He leant forward quickly. "Have you? And so have I." For the first time in their knowledge of each other this was real intimacy. They had become to some extent intimate, as strangers, on the long train journey from Scotland, the last time he was in England. She had got into his carriage. He had procured her a luncheon-basket, amid difficulties, and they had discussed subsequently many topics of interest to them both.

He had been charmed by her laughing assent to his request that he might call at her little house in Pont Street.

"So deliciously unconventional," she had said, "my aunt Agnes will be shocked to death, poor darling; yes, do come."

But none of the lunches at the Carlton or teas in her drawing-room, when she had made him tell her something of war and its realities, had had the same air of delightful intimacy as there seemed to be in this drive through the dark, mysterious streets.

"May I smoke a cigarette with you at home?" he asked. "I am going away on Friday."

"Oh, are you?" Was there a tinge of startled regret in her voice? He was not sure.

"Yes, if you like."

He sat before the log fire and admired the graceful way she toyed with her cigarette-case. There was no doubt this woman was damnably attractive. And clever, too. They were so seldom both.

She leant back in a big chair. As she took the lighted match from him their fingers touched.

"Where are you going on Friday?" she asked carelessly. He was always going backwards and forwards between France and England.

(Continued on page 28)

"DELILAH" (continued from page 27)

He mentioned the name of a well-known town, near which was something that the enemy would describe as a military establishment of considerable importance. It was evidently known to Estelle, for she mentioned it quite naturally. Why? he wondered, and then picked up a silver frame on a side-table.

"What a pretty child this is," he said, by way of changing the subject.

And the watching woman smiled behind the smoke.

. . . . . .

In the train, as it tore northward, his thoughts wandered to her. He pulled his mind back to the details of his work. In truth his responsibilities were heavy enough—and there was so much to be done in these next two days. But detail after sombre detail of his mission became blurred and fragmentary. He could not hold consecutive trains of thought for any length of time. He tried to piece together slowly fact upon fact in connection with his duties; and when he had settled down to a careful analysis of that data or those figures, a woman in tweeds would pass along the corridor, and back would flick the shutter of his mind to the dark interior of a car as it turned out of St. James's Street, of a faint perfume which hung between him and the silent figure opposite; of the shadow which seemed for a moment to drift across her face as she bade him good night. He had talked to her as he had talked to no other woman ever before. Not of his work so much. No; but of life and its realities and horrors; of love in the abstract, and that was sweet intercourse—of death, which seemingly she, too, had faced; he wondered how? She would not say. How good some women were!

The crowd jostled him on the platform at X——. It was bitterly cold with a drizzling rain. He shivered as he opened his fur-lined coat to search for change for the porter.

A woman carrying a baby touched his arm.

"Kind sir, spare a penny, and buy some matches."

The cold glare of the station lamps accentuated her pinched, tired face.

He half turned away and frowned.

"Not one penny, sir? Think what this 'ere night means ter me, sir—think." She half spoke, half-sobbed. He glanced idly down at her, and at the child covered in a drab shawl.

A truck of milk-cans was pushed by with a "mind-yer-backs-please." She was pressed close against him for a moment, with quivering mouth and haunted, hungry eyes.

A sudden vision of another picture swept over him. A London drawing-room, and a woman toying with a cigarette. . . .

He gave her half-a-crown, and turned abruptly away, followed by her blessings.

. . . . . .

"Yes, show her in," said the grave-faced man in the inner room. He took a small leather case from a drawer at his side, and smiled.

Florence Lestrange, *alias* Estelle Ferrière, coloured slightly at the effusion of her welcome.

Chief Superintendent Hobbs is not given to overmuch flattery, as Scotland Yard will tell you.

"You're the smartest little woman I've struck for many a long day," he said, amongst other things.

"Let me see." He consulted a file of papers on his table. "What's his record?" . . . "H'm—yes. Heinrich von Haldenstein, late Major 14th Bavarian Infantry; now working as Major Walter Tollemache Hunter, G.S.O.H., Headquarters Staff. Yes, very nice—*very nice indeed!* This is the man who worked the wireless stunt at Harwich. Quite a number of eminent gentlemen have been watching him for some time past. Never thought he'd dare come across again, and in that rig. How did you get this, by the way?" He tapped the leather pocket-book.

"The old game," replied his visitor listlessly. "Got to —— first; weeping woman with child;

(Concluded on page 54)

As she took the lighted match from him, their fingers touched"

A Few Xmas Fragments

By Captain Bruce Bairnsfather

Blighty!

Cheer O!

A Christmas Message from the Front

By Captain Bruce Bairnsfather

Two years ago, as Christmas Eve slowly froze itself on into Christmas Day, I sat in a front line trench—my first war Christmas. I myself, like everyone else, was a pulpy lump of mud. Across the frozen turnip field in front were the Boche trenches. I lay in my low-roofed dug-out like an ice between two wafers, and thought. "Christmas Day, Father Christmas, plum puddings, mistletoe, all gone west this year," I said to myself. But surely not quite; we'll never lose the spirit of Christmas. Good old Father Christmas is a neutral, after all (though sometimes when I think of his real name, "Santa Claus," I fear that he may be interned). I was right. In spite of the turnip-field, the bully, biscuits, and plum and apple, we had our Christmas, and a merry one, too. Now I know. Christmas will be Christmas, whatever fixtures we've got on, and, what's more, it's going to be a better one each year. Here's the third one now. Third round of the great contest for the Belgian Belt and the Balkan Bowl.

When all those Herr von Somethings trained their man up to rush in for a "knock out" in the first round they failed. When the first Christmas Day, 1914, came we were both sitting on chairs in our respective corners with neutral towels waving, but that "knock out" had failed. And now, here's the third round. We don't want chairs and towels now. We can knock the Boche into the ropes when and where we please. As for him, he not only wants chairs and towels, but he wants someone or other to shout "Time!" and hopes for a win on points. Not —— likely! This is where we come in. Just as Jess Willard, the short-trained white man withstood Jack Johnson's would-be "knock out" and finally chose his time to knock him out himself, so we'll do the same.

. . . . . .

That first Christmas of ours was a merry one. Strange, but true. If you don't believe it, ask my dear old pals, Bill, Bert, and Alf.

May the third one be three times as merry. It will be, too.

I'd like to take any unbelievers on a tour round some spots I know on Christmas Eve. Just to look in at the open *estaminet* door, see all the Bills, Berts, and Alfs, warworn, but merry, laughing, talking, singing in the smoky atmosphere. Go down the long, winding cart-rutted lane, under the stars to the billeting farm. See the blackened "dixies" simmering on the mud oven in the field outside, look into the old barn across the yard, see the boys sitting around amongst the straw. The post's just come! "Someone ain't 'alf sent Bill a plum puddin'."

Then come alone up to the trenches past the ration dump. "'Ere, you! Take this 'ere corrugated iron up to B Company." ("—— this corrugated iron!") Don't mind that, it's all over soon; come along the corduroy boards over the desolate mud plain, see a glimmer of light ahead. Just a glow from a fire-bucket. Old Bill "knockin' up a bit o' somethin' to eat" in a mess-tin lid. "Bet they're 'avin' a bit of a time in England to-night, Bert. Never mind, old cock, as soon as we've put it across these —— t'other side of the field we'll go back and make up for lost time." "'Ave ye 'ung up yer sandbag, 'Arry? It's Christmas Day to-morrer."

That's the tour I'd take. Cheer O, everybody! May it be as merry a Christmas as I wish for. A muddy, but merry Khristmas for the Kaiser Krushers.

BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

There are times when Private Lightfoot feels absolutely convinced that it's going to be a War of Exhaustion

BY CAPTAIN BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

The Sort of Film

HOW DICK MANVERS

Every familiar feature of the Film is happily caricatured by Captain Bairnsfather in his amusing page of pictures. The hero, the heroine (with smile), the villain, the heavy father, all of the most approved pattern—everything down to the meticulous inaccuracy

We'll Have for Years

GOT HIS STAR

characteristic of the American film in matters of detail, is shown with the good-natured sarcasm befitting a master of satire as well as of humour, while the story tells itself with breathless enthusiasm

Overheard in an Orchard

Said the Apple to the Plum : "Well, anyway, old man, they can never ask us what we did in the great war!"

Real Sympathy

I wish you'd get something for that cough o' yours. That's the second time you've blown the blinkin' candle out!"

These War Sensations

THAT "OUT WIRING" FEELING

His Christmas Goose

"YOU WAIT TILL I COMES OFF DOOTY"

Insoluble

FILL THE BLANKS

SECOND PRIZE	FIRST PRIZE	THIRD PRIZE
4d	£5,000,000	2d

also 30,000 prizes of 1d each
45,000 tin openers as consolation prizes

Merely a knowledge of human nature required

Mark your envelopes "BLANKS" and address to:-
Editor "Bystander"
Shell Trap Farm
St Jean

EXAMPLE
Old Bill says:-
Well I'm hanged I'd like to catch the bad man that did that I'd jolly well knock his silly 'ead off.

Old Bill has just noticed that a stray bullet has perforated his Rum jar, and his last drop has melted away into the sandbags.

HE SAYS:—"Well I'm —d, I'd like to catch the — that did that. I'd — well knock 'is —'ead off"

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

Fill in the coupon opposite, and forward it (together with a postal order for Sixpence) to the Editor, who, if he & his office are still there, will at once forward the prizes to winners, if they are still there. Entries must reach the office not later than any date you like

Name.....
Old Bill says:—

The Scamp

A STORY OF A WAR-TIME CHANGE

By R. B. INCE

RUTH had been brought up on the Bible.

For purposes of education and consolation the Book of books is, without doubt, excellent, but it should never be forgotten that variety is one of the laws by which we live.

In Ruth's case it had been forgotten.

Mrs. Patterson was a very religious woman. She came of Scottish parentage, and her early years had been passed in the Manse. Good words, no less than good works, had been to her from infancy an ever-present need. Without them her soul would have suffered starvation—not that she ever put her soul to the test.

It happened, therefore, that Ruth had grown up in an evangelical atmosphere of Bible-classes and missionary meetings. At the age of four she knew the chronological list of the Kings of Israel and Judah by heart; at five she could repeat most of the Psalms without prompting, and at ten she could put up extempore a very creditable missionary prayer, with the time-honoured conventional touches about palms in the desert and fountains of refreshing water in a dry place. Indeed, she often dreamed of those fountains, for vaguely she was aware that she dwelt in a very dry place herself.

She said grace before meat, went to church three times on Sunday, taught in Sunday school, was attentive and deferential to missionaries, read the books her mother chose for her, was further instructed in the way of righteousness by a daily governess selected for her piety, and was uncomfortably aware that there was something wrong in the household. Exactly what was wrong she could not determine. She felt that, despite a genuine affection for her mother, she belonged to the uncomfortable band of people who are too good to live—and yet have lived. Had she died when Ruth was a very little girl her saintly memory would have been very excellent to dwell upon. Saintliness is so much nicer in legend than in life. But Ruth did not put these reflections into words—scarcely into thoughts.

Nevertheless, she was aware of something in the household that was like a blight on her young spirits. In her case the system "had not worked." Something was wrong. It could not be connected with her mother, for was she not constantly busied in good works? And there was no reason to suspect her father. Therefore, by the method of elimination, the burden must rest upon herself. It was a very alarming discovery, and she began to feel a secret sympathy for poor Atlas in the advertisement, bearing the world on his bowed shoulders.

Mrs. Patterson was a great talker. Prolonged Bible-study, joined with a congenital fluency of tongue, had ensured her a ready flow of improving ideas. She was a tall, thin woman with a large mouth and an emphatic manner of speech. Persons of few ideas or low vitality, choosing the line of least resistance, fell into the habit of listening while she talked. It demanded great physical energy to take the leading part in a conversational encounter with Mrs. Patterson.

Mr. Patterson remained quite untroubled alike by his wife's good works and volubility. And for an excellent reason. He was nearly stone deaf. The doctors had given a Latin name to his deafness; it was all they were able to do for him after several consultations. They informed his wife there was a block, or stoppage, in the tube, or passage, at the extreme

(Continued on page 42)

"The real attraction was Ruth"

(All rights strictly reserved)

"'Till the Boys

ys Come Home"

THE SCAMP (contiued from page 30)

end of the peri-something-or-other. She referred to it afterwards as the "periscope," but that merely arose from her complete ignorance of scientific terminology.

He had been compelled, in consequence, to retire from his position in a Government department, and to live an extremely isolated life in the country. His mornings were spent in his garden, his afternoons were spent in his garden, and, in summer-time, his evenings were spent in his garden. He had always been a big man, and retirement did not, in his case, prove a cure for obesity. Sixteen odd stone had been his weight when he last had the courage to weigh himself. But that was just before he retired.

Since nobody but his wife could make him hear with any accuracy, it was inevitable that he should come to rely upon her almost entirely for news of the outer world. If strangers addressed him, he smiled affably, perspired a little, and wiped his forehead with a large pocket-handkerchief. And with that they had to be content.

But his malady, although he was hardly aware of the fact, was a blessing as well as a misfortune. It delivered him from the recurrence of many vain repetitions. The missionary meetings, the work-parties, the Bible-classes, the jumble sales that rendered the Patterson household a place of constant traffic, troubled Mr. Patterson hardly at all. Living, as he did, mainly in the garden, and always in the isolation of deafness, he was very seldom "in the way," and if he *did* happen to meet a strayed missionary on the doorstep, he shook hands cordially, smiled a welcoming smile, swept the dewdrops from his brow, and said, "Please walk in. My wife is expecting you." It was a polite phrase he had invented years ago, and it never failed to have the intended effect. If the missionary evinced a desire for conversation, he smiled a broader smile and repeated the invitation, administering the while a fraternal, but entirely successful, push from behind.

There were times when Ruth wished she also was afflicted with deafness. At the difficult and rebellious age of eighteen she began to hate missionaries, to take no interest in Sunday schools, and to be late for prayers on every possible occasion. And the tone in which she said grace was sometimes—well, not quite what it should have been. It caused her mother to look pained, and her father, noticing the expression, to wipe his forehead.

And when she was alone she would say: "It's as dull as ditchwater! I *hate* the life. Nothing ever happens!"

But just as things appeared at their dullest something *did* happen. Captain Ravenay appeared on the scene. And Captain Ravenay proved to be the brother of the notorious and immortal Prince Charming.

Captain Ravenay was a rover. Though still a few years under thirty, he had knocked about the world seeking his fortune in quite a bewildering number of capacities. His uncle having recently died and left him a useful little legacy, he had come home to spend it, and, incidentally, to serve his King and Country.

To Ruth, brought up ("fed up," as she would have expressed it) on Bible-classes, jumble sales, and missionary meetings, he came like a fresh breeze from far Pacific slopes.

Having a standing invitation to the Pattersons, he made a practice of riding over from the camp on Sunday afternoons and on as many other occasions as he could evade the routine duties of military life.

It was his fond belief (without the slightest foundation in fact) that he could make Mr. Patterson hear by shouting at close range. Curious adventures and thrilling escapes in which he had played a creditable part were bawled into Mr. Patterson's ear. And since he nodded and wiped his brow at intervals Captain Ravenay was convinced that he was gifted with remarkable powers in dealing with the deaf.

Had he been questioned as to wherein lay the attraction of the Patterson household, he would have replied with apparent ingenuousness "Old Patterson's deafness." It was excellent practice (as he explained to brother officers who had heard scraps of his choicest yarns at a distance of some hundred yards from the Patterson's garden) in talking to the Colonel.

But it is to be feared Captain Ravenay was not quite so ingenuous as he seemed.

The real attraction was Ruth.

Mrs. Patterson knew it, and the taste of the knowledge was sour in her mouth.

She did not approve of Captain Ravenay.

His free-and-easy manner, roving life, and disposition to smile when Ruth said grace in an obviously bad temper, jarred upon her.

He was continually disturbing the atmosphere of the house and abetting Ruth in the flouting of discipline.

Also, he had a most distressing habit of turning up when he was not wanted.

For instance, when Mrs. Patterson had taken infinite pains in getting up a drawing-room meeting in aid of the Sarawakikki Indians, it was very annoying to have Captain Ravenay walking in and upsetting the solemnity of the occasion.

And that was what he invariably did. Either he would ask foolish questions which set everybody laughing, or else he would be attacked by a species of giggles in the painful suppression of which the assembled company took a far keener interest than in the matter under discussion.

The Missionary on this occasion was a little man with a moist eye and a dry voice. Having explained the need for funds to educate and clothe the Sarawakikki children, he made a funny croaking sound in his throat, and sat down.

Captain Ravenay rose.

Having with difficulty got the better of a disposition to giggle that always beset him at too solemn moments, he felt it incumbent upon him to put a serious question, if only to prove that he was entirely sober.

"About these little Sarawakiddies—Sarawakikki kiddies," he said. "I've been out there myself, you see, so I take a kind of interest in them. Jolly little kikkies—kiddies, I mean, they are too. But I—er—I don't quite understand about the fund. It is, I think you said, for educating them?"

"Yes," said the Missionary, "for educating and—ahem!—clothing them."

Something in the appearance of the reverend gentleman as he rose to give this information reminded

THE SCAMP (continued)

Captain Ravenay of a penguin. Why the thought of a penguin should have amused him at that moment of expectant silence, let psychologists explain—if they can. Anyway, it did. It tickled him horribly.

He again rose and tried to appear judicially, owlishly serious.

" Well—er—ha ! ha ! ha !—h'm ! h'm !—when I was out there—Sarawakikki was uncommonly hot—and the kiddies of Sarawakikki only wore—only wore—ha ! ha ! ha !—hum ! h'm !—very little.

That meeting was a complete fiasco. There is nothing so infectious in tense moments when levity appears worse than crime as suppressed giggles. Captain Ravenay had to go out into the garden to

" Giggles ! " he shouted. " Giggles ! Have you ever had them ? "

recover himself, and several others stole away, making strange sounds behind pocket-handkerchiefs. Finding Mr. Patterson rolling the grass, he tried to explain what had happened.

" Giggles ! " he shouted ; " giggles ! Have *you* ever had them ? "

Mr. Patterson wiped his brow furiously and nodded.

" They're the very devil sometimes ! The very devil ! " shouted the Captain, to the scandal of the guests who were filing demurely from the front-door.

If the Captain's chances of winning favour with Mrs. Patterson were slender before, after the Sarawakikki meeting they were simply *nil*. He was haunted by the uncomfortable suspicion that his behaviour had, in his own phrase, " put the lid on it."

The dilemma in which he found himself was this. Either he must run the risk of making his affairs unpleasantly public by shouting into Mr. Patterson's ear or he must apply to Mrs. Patterson.

He decided on the latter alternative—with disastrous results.

Mrs. Patterson uttered an emphatic " No " when he pleaded to be engaged to Ruth, and shut her mouth with a decisive snap. Pressed for reasons, she declared with emphasis that Ruth was much too young to think of such a thing. Also that, in consideration of her careful upbringing, she had every hope that Ruth would marry a missionary—or at least a clergyman.

So Captain Ravenay shook the dust of the Patterson residence from his feet and swore ; not loudly, but just that gentle swearing under the breath that calms the thoughts and quiets the nerves.

That evening Mrs. Patterson took her husband to the furthest corner of the meadow behind their garden and shouted the dreadful news into his ear.

" He's a scamp ! " she screamed in conclusion, " a thorough scamp ! I'd rather see her dead at my feet ! "

Mr. Patterson glanced uneasily at his boots, as if to steel himself for the worst in case of dread necessity, and nodded an emphatic affirmative. Isolated as he had been for the last fifteen years, he had grown accustomed to take his wife's word without question or dispute. Since she informed him that the Captain's stories were unseemly and his behaviour outrageous, there was nothing more to be said. Also, it was true that Ruth was young. Ruth would get over it.

In the meantime Ruth showed signs of active rebellion. She put forward the startling plea that she was old enough to know her own mind ; that Captain Ravenay was " a better man than half a dozen missionaries packed into one " ; that she was bored to death with the silly old life at home, and that in future she should only go to church twice on Sunday and never in the week ; and that she would be doing more good by conducting a 'bus in London.

Mrs. Patterson wept tears into the family Bible, but remained obdurate. The page containing the 51st Psalm was all cockled and spoilt.

The story might have ended at this point, with Ruth standing forlorn among the dandelions in the meadow, like the other Ruth among the alien corn. Indeed, it would have been a very pleasant picture for the mind to carry away—for Ruth was very young and very fair—save that we should have left her in tears.

Since she could not go and help in the war, as patriotism and (must we admit it ?) pique prompted, the war very accommodatingly came to her assistance.

It came in the form of a wandering Zeppelin that mistook the meadow where the dandelions grew for an important fortification. It dropped a bomb, which quite spoilt the hay harvest. Most of the grass and dandelions vanished as by magic. Every window in the Patterson's house was broken, and 3,000 leaflets connected with the education and

(Continued on page 44)

THE SCAMP (concluded from page 43)

clothing of the Sarawakikki children were blown out of the dining-room and freely distributed in the road. In the process it made, of course, considerable noise. Even Mr. Patterson fancied he 'heard something." Next instant he was sitting bolt upright in bed, a look of bewilderment upon his face.

"Jove!" he exclaimed, 'something's gone pop in my head!" It was literally true. The obstruction, classified by the doctors, had gone pop. With the result that he could hear as clearly as ever he heard in his life.

Next day, trusting to the amenities bred of misfortune, Captain Ravenay came to offer his sympathy.

"No need to shout, my boy," Mr. Patterson assured him, "no need to shout. I have to keep warning my wife about that. She'll be sending me deaf again."

"The deuce she will! I mean," the Captain hastened to add rather lamely, "one gets into habits.'

But although the explosion was a blessing to Mr. Patterson, it was not an unmixed blessing.

"Persons of few ideas or low vitality choosing the line of least resistance fell into the habit of listening while she talked"

Having been kept closely at work during the years when his hearing was unimpaired, he had not realised what an incessant talker his wife was, nor how many excellent, but very boring, folk she had invited to the house.

He found it the greatest relief to talk to Captain Ravenay and to listen to his yarns of foreign travel. They did not strike him as nearly so unseemly as his wife had led him to believe.

They became very friendly.

Finally he determined to take up a strong and resolute attitude in the face of opposition.

"It's all d——d nonsense!" he said to his wife, "Captain Ravenay's as good a fellow as you'll find anywhere. And if Ruth wants to marry him why, damn it, she shall!"

And she did.

Amongst the wedding presents was a much-prized gold brooch, representing a Zeppelin. It was the gift of the bridegroom.

R. B. Ince

FATHER CHRISTMAS

"TAKING FRENCH LEAVE"

MILITARISM IN SPORT.

By A. S. ALLBERRY

KING'S REGULATIONS APPLIED TO GAMES

November, 1920.

SINCE the end of the war great strides have been made in the organisation of sport. The slipshod ways of the obsolete civilian days have been replaced by up-to-date military methods. From start to finish each match is arranged, played, and dismissed on strict K.R. lines, as the following report of the match between A Company of the 4th Wessex and B Company of the 5th Peacewicks on Saturday last at Somewhereton will show.

At 1.35 p.m. the 4th Wessex Section paraded in full playing kit at headquarters before the company sergeant-major.

"Slope Sticks!"

"Open order—march!"

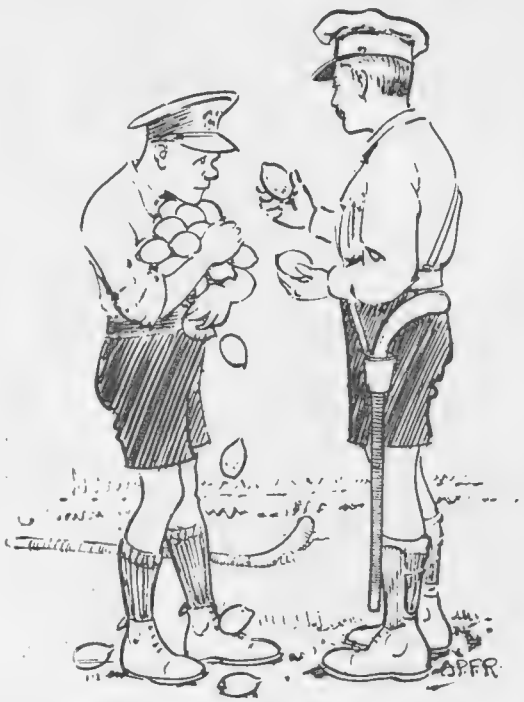
"For inspection — port sticks!"

"Remove blazers!"

"Order sticks!"

"Close order—march!"

At 1.57 the team entrained amid the cheers of the reserves, and were hurried off to the field, where the usual compliments were paid to the Peacewicks Section, which had already arrived.



The Orderly officer inspected the lemon rations

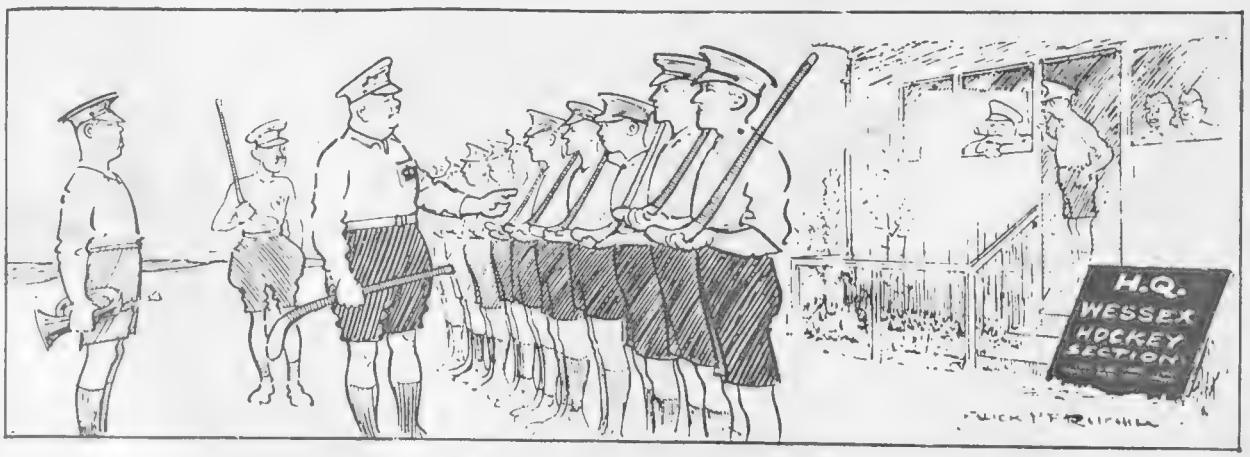
Each team was inspected by the O.C. the pitch, and was played on to the ground by the regimental band.

"Team, 'shun! Slope sticks. Move to the right in file—right turn—left wheel—quick march! Team, Halt! Lieut. Norman, you will be in charge of the forward line. Lieut. Coburn, you will command the supports in the half-back area. Lieut. Murley, you will act as O.C. at the base and throw out two lines of communication at full-back distances. Move off!"

The front line at once moved off, and, extending at the double, took up their positions at ten paces interval, the support line acting in similar fashion some distance in the rear.

The bugle sounded the advance, and the service "greens" of the Wessex came into action simultaneously with the Peacewicks' "bulgers" in the centre of the line, range cards having been already given out. Immediately a "Jack Johnson"-like shot from the Wessex centre passed the ball out to the Peacewicks' left flank. The movement was at once perceived by the enemy's observers, and the signal was given for a "left incline" of their half-backs. Heavy reinforcements from their base line checked the advance on this wing, and the ball being passed along the lines of communication, a violent counter attack was made from the Peacewicks' left flank. This move might well have succeeded in penetrating the Wessex second line of defence but for the fact that the Peacewicks in their advance had crossed the

(Continued on page 48



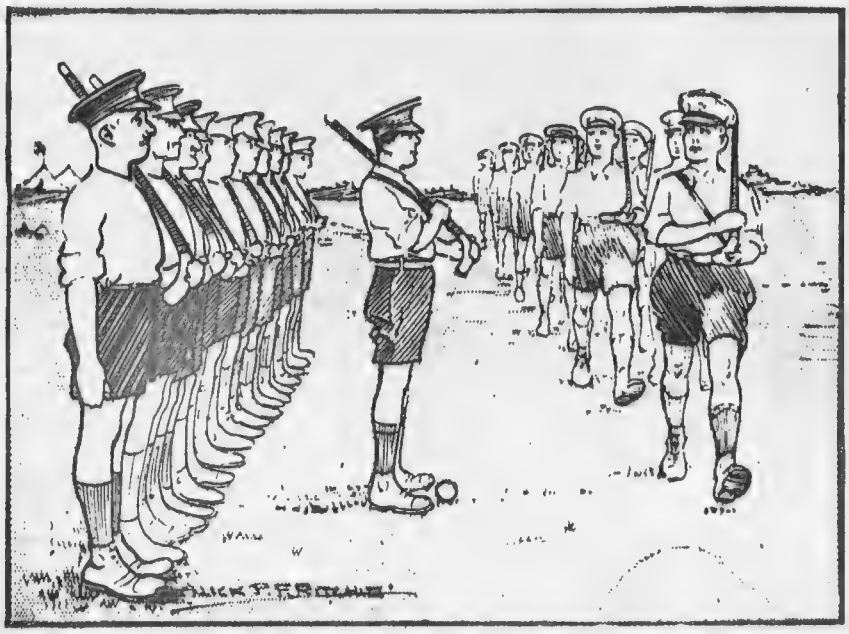
"At 1.35 p.m. the 4th Wessex section paraded before the Company Sergeant-Major"

"Scaling Dizzy Heights"

HOW YOUNG ITALY OCCUPIES ITS PLAY-TIME

MILITARISM IN SPORT (concluded from page 46)

frontier touch line into neutral territory, and the ball was promptly interned by the O.C. the linesmen. The Wessex bomb-throwers were brought up, and the ball rolled in towards their right centre, where a general engagement resulted in a casualty to the Wessex team. The R.H.M.C. ambulance came on at



"The usual compliments were paid to the Peacewicks' team"

the double, and the case was promptly removed to the pitch hospital. The contest was resumed, and although several bomb-like shots were hurled by the flying wings at either goal, no real strategic advantage had been scored by either side when the "Cease Fire" bugle went at half-time.

"Orderly—Lemons."

"Sorry, sir, O.C. lemons regrets to report that owing to breakdown to the H.S.C. Transport the lemon rations have been delayed. We have, however, requisitioned supplies from our football allies in the adjoining field, and the lemon squad will parade in five minutes."

The rations duly arrived, and were inspected by the Orderly Subaltern. Only one complaint was made. "I see nothing wrong with this slice of lemon." "No, sir, the lemon's all right, but being a first lieutenant I am entitled to two pips instead of one." This was reported and adjusted just as the "Fall In" was sounded. The second half of the game was started with a good beefy bully to the advantage of the Territorial side, which was maintained until the end of the game.

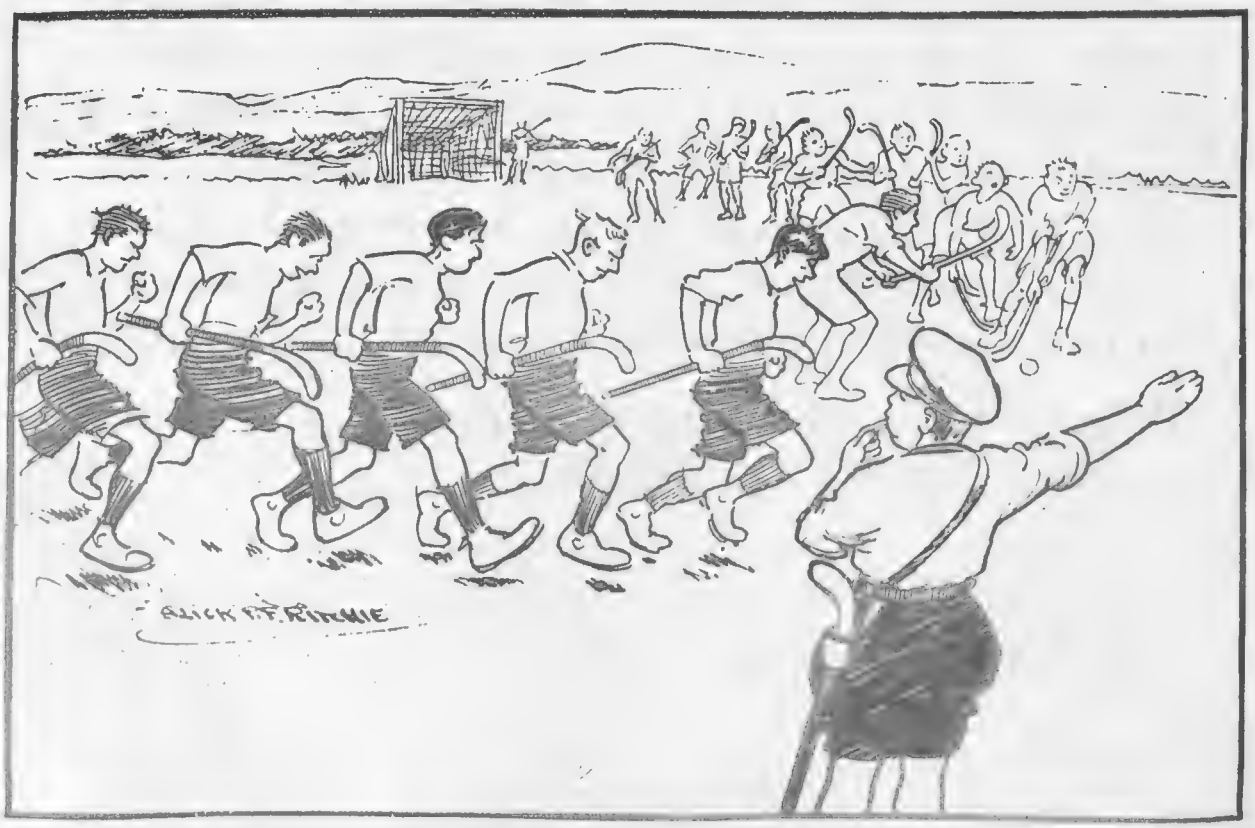
In spite of some wordy protests and a show of feeling on the part of the neutral spectators, the crowd of onlookers were, on the whole, satisfied that they had had their money's worth.

"Plum and apple" was served out with the tea rations, and the teams afterward moved off in column of route to their headquarters.

A peaceful round-table conference was held at a later hour to discuss the result of the match. An indemnity was claimed for the Wessex casualty.

The result will be promulgated in due course.

A. S. A.



"The signal was given to reinforce the Wessex right flank"

NAPIER

SUPER-EXCELLENT.

The Napier, the original six-cylinder car, has always been recognised as the proved best.

It has to its credit the marvellous record of more than four times the number of official Royal Automobile Club Certificates than any other make of six-cylinder car in existence. The post-war Napier will be the last word in refinement, appearance, smooth-running and reliability. It will be essentially the car of quality.

Please let us enter your name on the distinguished Napier waiting-list.

D. NAPIER & SON, LIMITED,
14, New Burlington Street, LONDON, W.
Works: Acton, London, W.

MOTORS

Na Poo

A TYPICAL TOPICAL TALE OF THE TRENCHES

Most people have a liking for
Those touching tales about the War
That show the Hero, sword in hand
(Swords are *not* worn, I understand!),
Leading his men in fierce assault,
And never, never calling "Halt!"
But, just as Victory comes to crown
His gallant effort, stricken down;
Then, later on, nursed back to life
By some sweet duck he makes his wife. . . .

—•••—

You know the sort of thing I mean?
Well, lately at some pains I've been
(With intervals for food and slumber)
To write one for our Christmas Number.
So here it is. If I were you
I shouldn't bother if it's true
Or false—or pretty good, or rotten—
At any rate, it's soon forgotten!

—•••—

Augustus Jones, a year ago,
Was really quite a Knut, you know,
And in an office drove a pen,
Like scores and scores of other men;
But after office hours were done,
Augustus Jones was "out for fun,"
And spent his jolly evenings with
Miss Emmeline Dorinda Smith,
A charming girl, who found her "boy"
A never-ending source of joy:
To music-halls they loved to go,
Or to some moving-picture show,
And through the darkened streets they'd roam,
Circuitously seeking home.

—•••—

About the War they didn't care,
Of course, it wasn't their affair;
But all at once, to their dismay,
They found Conscription "come to stay;"
And poor Augustus (twenty-three,
And timid as a man could be),
Not being among the "Indispensables,"
Found himself in the "Fighting Fencibles"!
But, though the everlasting drill
(He thought) would make him very ill,
Augustus recognised, ere long,
He'd never been so fit and strong.
He gave up cigarettes for pipes,
And actually got his "stripes,"
And when the order came "for France"
Got keen as mustard on his chance
Of doing deeds of glittering glory . . .
—But that is *quite* another story!

—•••—

Now for a moment I must wander
From Jones's doings. Let us ponder
On the sad fate of Emmeline,
Who all this sickening time has been
Weeping to think no more she'll see
Her dear Augustus. Victory,
And Glory, such as Victory brings,
Were quite outside her scheme of things:
She only wanted (who can blame her?)
A Husband—what could well be tamer?—
But, seeing all the men were gone,
Marriage could not be reckoned on;
So Emmeline, although she might
Have made munitions day and night,
Embarked on something even worse,
And soon became—a Red Cross Nurse!

—•••—

("Oh, help!" I hear you groan, "what rot!
A stale and antiquated plot,
The outcome's plain as plain can be!"
Patience, dear reader! "Wait and see!")

—•••—

To Corporal Jones we now return,
And it will do you good to learn
That our Augustus, truth to tell,
Fought very tolerably well,
And valorously gained—ahem!—
Both the V.C. and D.C.M.,
But also—not so nice a prize—
A nasty cut across the eyes;
A wound of quite a "Cushy" kind,
Which left him, for the present, blind.

—•••—

And next we see him safe in bed,
A bandage bound about his head,
While at his side, with face so pale,
There sits——. No! No! That spoils the tale!
A gentle voice familiar seems
(But wounded men have curious dreams),
Dear fingers soothe his sad contusions
(But wounded men get strange delusions!)

—•••—

At last arrives the longed-for day
When bandages are laid away,
And sight returns to longing eyes.
Conceive Augustus's surprise,
As from his brow the wrappings fall! . . .
It wasn't Emmeline at all!!

—•••—

(There, now! I warned you how 'twould be!
And you're as much annoyed as he:
And really all because I've not
Just followed out the hackneyed plot!)

—•••—

So Corporal Jones returned to "Blighty,"
But Emmeline, the fair but flighty,
Wedded, the first week she went "out,"
A Major-General with the gout,
Who, though she nursed him very badly
Adored her, passionately, madly. . . .

—•••—

MORAL

A Moral wouldn't come amiss,
I think. But what the Moral *is*
I've not the least idea! *Have you?*

Good-bye. Ta-ta. So long. *Na poo!*

F. R. BURROW

CHRISTMAS JEWELLERY

from a collection of

THE
GOLDSMITHS & SILVERSMITHS COMPANY LTD.

with which is incorporated The Goldsmiths Alliance Ltd (A. B. Savory & Sons) Established 1751

Jewellers to H.M. the King.

Diamond Necklace, with Pink Coral Drop. Set in Palladium. **£10 10 0**

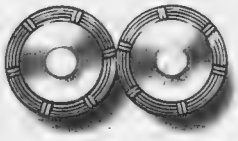
Diamond and Black Onyx Miniature Pendant. Set in Palladium. **£21 0 0**

Diamond Date Brooch. Set in Palladium. **£35 0 0**

Black Watch Badge Safety Pin, Fine Gold, Palladium and Enamel. **£3 5 0**

Diamond Pendant. **£21 0 0**

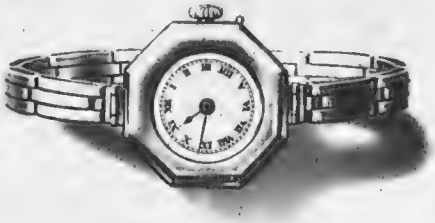
Diamond Necklace, with Pink Coral Drop. Set in Palladium. **£35 0 0**



White Mother-o'-Pearl, Platinum Border and Pearl Centre. Sleeve Links, **£4 10 0** per pair. Buttons, per set of six, **£6 5 0**

Diamond and Crystal Hatpin. **£17 0 0** per pair.

Sapphire and Diamond Fancy Cluster Ring. Set in Palladium. **£15 0 0**



Keyless Lever Watch, fully Jewelled Compensation Balance, mounted on English-made Expanding Bracelet, 9-ct. Gold. **£6 15 0**

Diamond and Baroque Pearl Earrings. **£5 5 0** per pair.

Only One Address. *No Branches.*

112 Regent Street, London, W.

London Lore for London Lovers

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT TOWN AND SUBURB
BY "TOM O' LONDON"

[*The following paragraphs were evidently intended for the* EVENING NEWS, *but as they have been sent to this office we have no scruples whatever in publishing them.*]

Trafalgar Square

P. J. P. (Ponder's End).—This famous square is called after the Battle of Trafalgar. In the centre is the well-known column with Lord Nelson on the top, known to the Navy as the "mast-headed Admiral." (It was probably for this reason that the *Ironic Order* was adopted for the column). When the square was designed it was suggested that it should be laid out with grass plots and flowers, but the idea came to nothing. "But anyhow," it was pointed out by a well-known wit of the day (believed to be Benjamin Trovato), "we have made a good start with these four dandy lions!" This, of course, referred to the handsome animals by Landseer which surround the plinth.

* *

Royal Academy

R. J. (Moreton-in-the-Marsh).—The home of the Royal Academy is Burlington House, Piccadilly. It is here that the annual exhibition is held, where the supposedly best artists of the year are "hung," and a good many others deserve to be. The pictures are all numbered and a comprehensive catalogue can be had at the door, so that it is comparatively a simple matter to find out in a few minutes what a particular picture is meant to be.

* *

Temple Bar

W. S. N. (Walmer).—This picturesque, but cumbrous, archway, which at one time stood on the site occupied by the Griffin, is now an ornament in the grounds of Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux. It is said that when the gallant Admiral was about to be given a bar to his medal the authorities said, by way of a joke: "Let's give him Temple Bar!" The Admiral immediately closed with the offer, and not caring to explain that they were only in jest, the Admiralty acquired the Bar (*faute de mieux*), and Sir Hedworth had it re-erected in his grounds at Theobald's Park.

* *

St. Paul's Cathedral

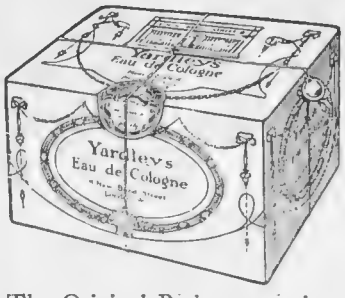
J. F. B. (Barnstaple).—It is quite true that the foundations of this venerable pile were discovered to be insecure, and it is said that the whole edifice is gradually slipping down the hill. It is still, however, quicker to take a motor-omnibus, for if you stand on the steps of the Cathedral and keep your eyes on a fixed point the movement westward is almost imperceptible. Early in the war the Germans accused us of having mounted anti-aircraft guns on the sacred edifice, but they were probably confusing these with the minor canons which abound. [To be con——. No you don't!—ED.]

W. HODGSON BURNET

"SOME" STOCKINGS

SANTA CLAUS BEETLE: "Gracious sakes! I quite forgot young Willie Centipede lived here!"

Yardley's
Eau de Cologne



The Original Package contains ½ doz. 4 oz. bottles of Yardley's Eau de Cologne, and forms a most acceptable Xmas present.

Original Package - price **14/6**

4 oz. bottles, *illustrated below*, **2/6**

Wickered Bottles:

½ pint, **4/-** Pint, **7/6**

Quart, **15/-** Magnum, **30/-**

For Cut Glass Bottles & other styles and sizes see Price List, post free.

A Charming Xmas Gift

A PRESENT to be acceptable need not be costly, but should be the best of its kind.

Yardley's famous Eau de Cologne is the genuine and veritable essence—its fragrance and its refreshing quality are unequalled.

It is the finished product of 150 years' experience in distilling and blending the choicest essences of fruits and flowers.

A gift of Yardley's Eau de Cologne carries with it more than its fragrance. The thoughtful discrimination shown by its selection claims a kindly remembrance revived at every use.

The Name is the Hall Mark of Quality.

Yardley

8 New Bond St., W.

AND OF ALL HIGH-CLASS CHEMISTS AND STORES.

"DELILAH" (*concluded from page 28*)

'lifted' it at the right moment; bad light in station, etc." Her voice showed no trace of emotion.

"Anything in it?" she asked. She looked very tired.

"Nothing much; one cipher on oiled silk, undecodable, of course. But it was time we took him. You learned quite enough from him, my dear. Your weekly reports were admirable. Besides, he has had enough rope; carries too much information in that head of his. But it won't avail him—now." His face became grave again.

The woman shivered and drew her furs about her. "Is he for it——?"

The Chief nodded.

'Where did you get him?" she asked quietly.

The Chief Superintendent did not see the clenched hands inside the big muff.

"He hurried back to town the same night that you lifted his pocket-book. We took him in his taxi just outside King's Cross. Thank God the streets are dark; he gave enough trouble. I didn't hear you very well on the 'phone from ——, difficult to 'tap' code on a windy night—but we thought he'd come, and were ready.

"Here's something for you," he went on, pushing a packet of Treasury Notes towards her. "Expenses account for the month—here's the receipt form. You'll get your money in the usual way presently; and a fat bonus, too, if I have anything to do with it. But you want a rest, little woman." He looked at her shrewdly. "Go away for a bit until we send for you again, there's a good girl."

"I think I will," said the woman, rising. "I'm tired out."

The Chief Superintendent nodded sympathetically.

"Ah! well, you can't be a Delilah for nothing, I suppose. That's what our chaps call you, I hear."

"Same address as usual, I suppose?" he continued. "Right. Good-bye, my dear. Forget about this man—sleep it off. That's my advice to you. He's not worth bothering about."

"I will try," said the woman. But her tired eyes said otherwise.

DELL LEIGH

"The Bystander's" Christmas Wish to His Readers

May all of you, where'er you be,
Who this, our Christmas Number, see,
Be brighter for its coming:
Whether by home fireside you sit,
And hear the bells; or "do your bit"
"Out there," where guns are drumming.

May Christendom, a twelvemonth hence,
Have rallied round to common sense,
With every wrong well righted:
God grant your loved ones may return,
And hearts that now in absence yearn
Again be reunited.

F. R. B.

THERE is only one gramophone that has made a name for itself out there—that's the Decca. "Send me a Decca," writes the officer to his correspondent, "so that I can have entertainment wherever I go." "Send me a Decca," writes another, "so that I can keep my Company cheerful and prevent them dwelling upon the yesterdays and the to-morrows."

There are thousands of Deccas serving at the Front; numbers more in the Fleet, in Camps, and in Hospitals. Indeed there are more Deccas at the Front than all other gramophones put together. The Decca has proved itself best. It is infinitely more musical, it is truly portable, it can stand the weather and the hard conditions. No loose parts; no case needed; ready to play immediately opened.

Patented. Nos. 3033 and 631,877.

THE DECCA

Takes all Makes and Sizes of Needle Records.

THE PORTABLE GRAMOPHONE.

Read this thrilling account of a Decca on Active Service.

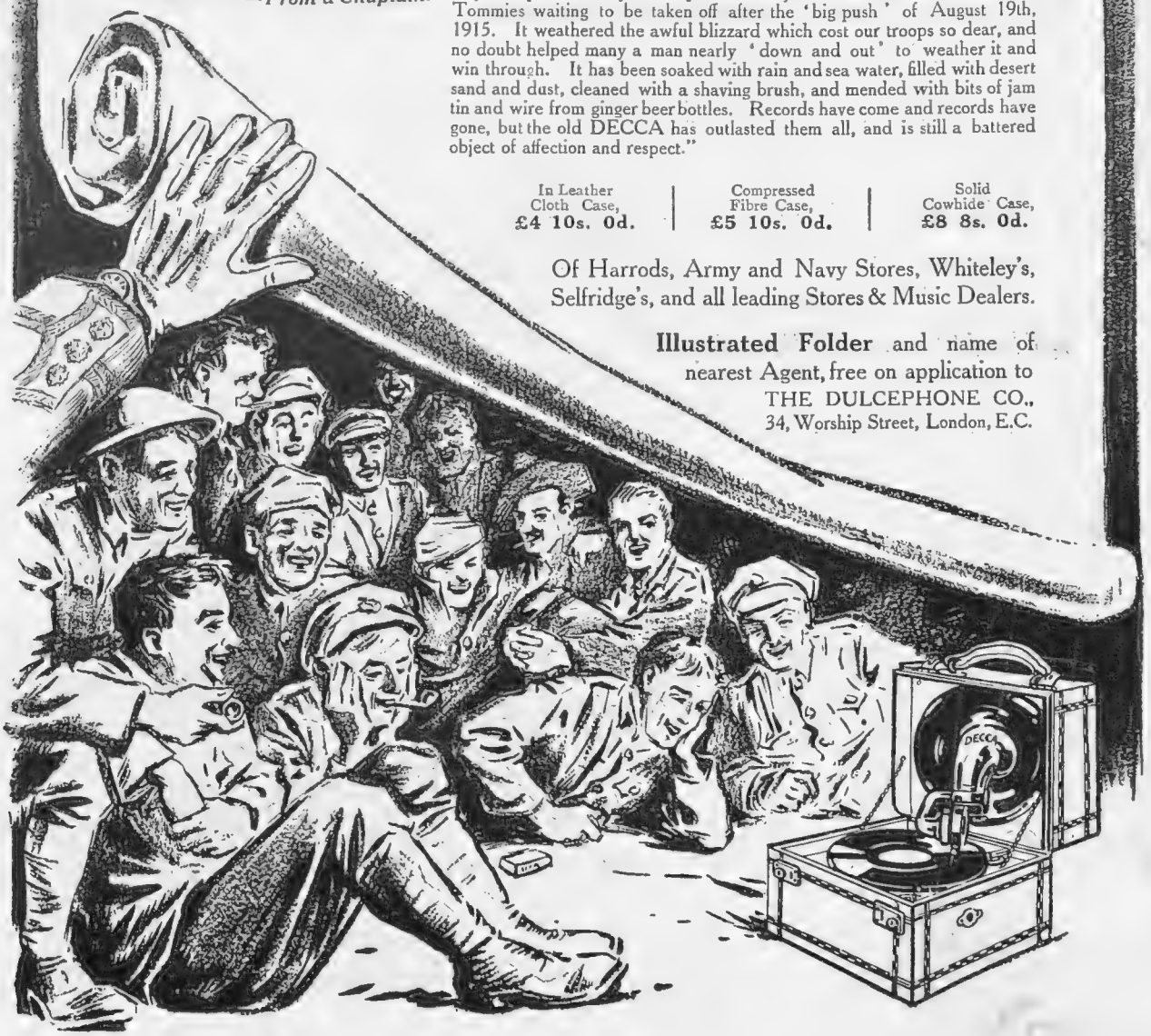
—From a Chaplain.

"IT may interest you to know that about 14 months ago one of your DECCA gramophones was sent out to me at Gallipoli, and that it has been in constant use from then up till now. It has played hymns at an (attempted) early Service when the Turkish batteries on Karakol devoted their best attention to our Lala Baba trenches at Suvla Bay. It passed many a weary hour away for the crowds of wounded Tommies waiting to be taken off after the 'big push' of August 19th, 1915. It weathered the awful blizzard which cost our troops so dear, and no doubt helped many a man nearly 'down and out' to weather it and win through. It has been soaked with rain and sea water, filled with desert sand and dust, cleaned with a shaving brush, and mended with bits of jam tin and wire from ginger beer bottles. Records have come and records have gone, but the old DECCA has outlasted them all, and is still a battered object of affection and respect."

In Leather Cloth Case,	Compressed Fibre Case,	Solid Cowhide Case,
£4 10s. 0d.	**£5 10s. 0d.**	**£8 8s. 0d.**

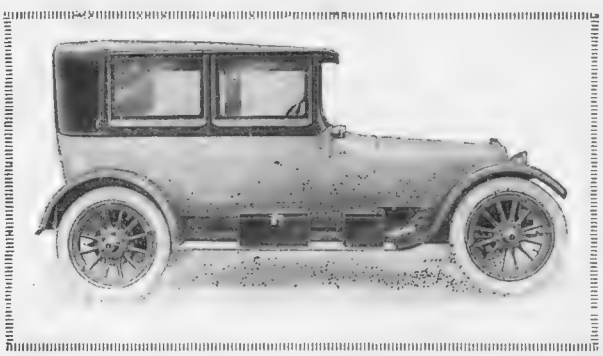
Of Harrods, Army and Navy Stores, Whiteley's, Selfridge's, and all leading Stores & Music Dealers.

Illustrated Folder and name of nearest Agent, free on application to
THE DULCEPHONE CO.,
34, Worship Street, London, E.C.



The Boomerang

M.O.: Well, what is it, my man?"
TOMMY: "When I was 'ome on leave, sir, I saw a chemist——"
M.O.: "Rot! Chemists always give bad advice"
TOMMY: "'And 'e told me to come and see you, sir!"



FOR TOWN OR COUNTRY.

AN all-weather car, easily convertible, open or closed, suitable for Town or Country use, is the latest addition to the Buick line. The Coach-work, the flexible and silent Six-Cylinder Buick Engine, the Self-starter and Electric Light equipment make it the ideal car for the owner driver. It is a car that is distinctive and superior in all those details which go to make up the car of quality. Specify one of these cars for your after-the-war requirements.

Buick
VALVE-IN-HEAD MOTOR CARS

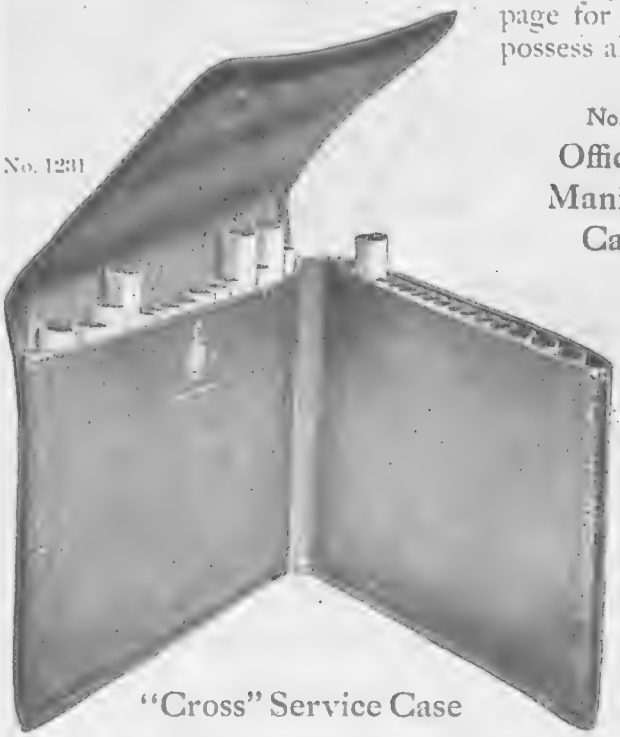
General Motors (Europe), Ltd., 136 Long Acre, London, W.C.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Because the service goods illustrated here have been personally bought by soldiers all through the year, a Gift may be wisely chosen from this page for a service man who does not possess all the goods here shown.

CROSS ESTABLISHED 1803 LONDON

No. 1231

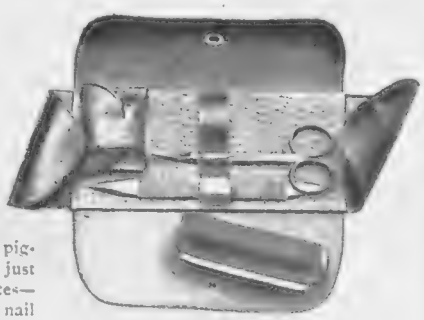


"Cross" Service Case

This is a neat, strong, thin Magazine to hold a full day's supply of cigarettes. The case has two pockets. Each takes 15 cigarettes—30 in all. No. 1231. Officer's Case, special superior quality in fine pigskin, with pigskin lined flap, very light and compact. Size, 5¼×3¼ in., **15/-** With silver gilt flexible clip mounting round edge of flap, **22/6** In Crocodile leather, unmounted, **22/6** With mounting, **30/-**

No. 756

Officer's Manicure Case



A small solid pigskin case with just the useful pieces—scissors, file, nail stone and polisher.

Note this polisher. Instead of being fitted with a tiny handle it has a strap loop through which the fingers of the right hand are passed when polishing the left hand, and vice versa.

No. 756. Finest Pigskin and Steel. Sizes closed 6½in. x 3in. x ¾in.

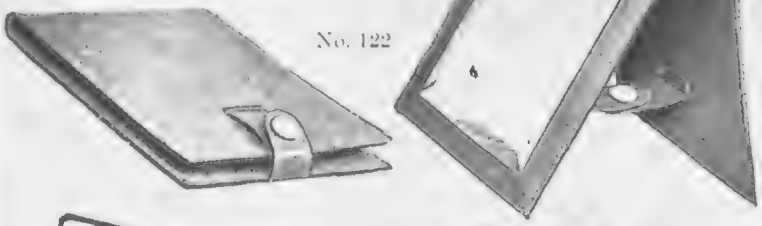
Price **12/-**

Mirror for Active Service

This is a well-protected plate-glass Shaving Mirror, superseding the metal mirror. The bevelled plate-glass is backed with canvas to prevent splinters flying. The stiffened flap affords protection, and the mirror can be hung or firmly stood. Size when closed, 6 × 4 × ⅜ ins.

No. 122. Plate-glass and finest Pigskin.

Price **10/6**



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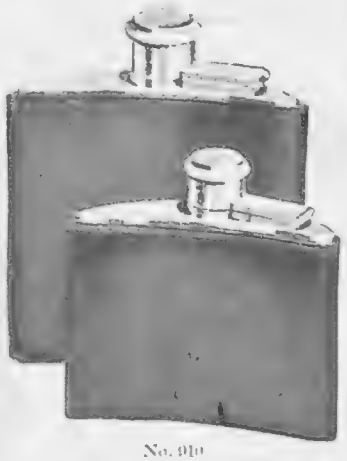


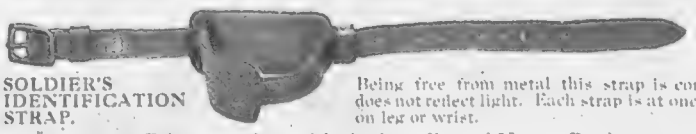
No. 910

"Cross" Service Flasks

Electro-plated on nickel silver. The slip covers, which minimise dents and scratches, are of thin pigskin. There are three sizes. Measured to the shoulder:

No. 910. 2¾ in. complete with cover, **16/6**
3½ in., **18/6** 3¾ in., **21/6**

Name engraved on flask, 2/6 Name and Regiment, 3/6 Initials on case, per letter, 6d.



No. 117

SOLDIER'S IDENTIFICATION STRAP.

Being free from metal this strap is comfortable to wear and does not reflect light. Each strap is at once adjustable to be worn on leg or wrist.

No. 117. Price complete with the branding of Name, Regiment and Religion, **5/6**

Write for a copy of the booklet **"Things a soldier needs."** The third edition is now ready. Besides illustrating many service articles of unique design, it shows a selection of things suitable for gifts to the folk at home

MARK CROSS Ltd

89 REGENT ST
LONDON, W

"A XMAS LETTER FROM BLANCHE" (*continued from page 16*)

well, stop killing each other and all that just for, say, one short week, and all come along home to be the joy and pride of all us millions of hopelessly adoring females.

⁂ ⁂

WHICH is absurd, I know. For nice, sensible, silly things like that aren't done, are they?—not when at war with the Hun, anyway. "It was an understood thing that during the dinner hour the gunners on both sides cried off," an artillery officer once told me. "We kept to our bargain strictly. But the Boches always sent at least three shells over just to remind us they weren't gentlemen."

⁂ ⁂

A RELIEF, by the way, isn't it, that we've left behind the days when we *fraternised* with the Hun at Christmas-time. We know a bit too much about him now, and it wasn't war, anyway, ever, and all men aren't brothers in war-time, when that kind of dreadfully sloppy sentiment is more out of place than ever. Takes all sorts, of course, to make a world, and in the rough and tumble one'll always meet some rum 'uns. But if there's any object in this ghastly war at all it's to see to it that in our generation at least one won't have to meet, at Christmas or any other time, on equal human friendly terms, the quite unspeakable Hun.

⁂ ⁂

I DON'T say we won't miss him. We have already, 'specially in the restaurants, where—oh! dear me, the *weird*, wild wash-outs that now come along with our daily dwindling food-portions! I really like the women better, though a woman and the wine-list—a pathetic sight. What? To her, poor ignorant wight, Bacchus, ever fair and young—Bacchus who opens the gate of the heart—is no more than, say, a strange new baby is to man. And as for cradling, cooling, taking the chill off—she doeth these things without reverence and thinketh of bibulous man meanwhile, "*Greedy*, that's what I call 'em!"

⁂ ⁂

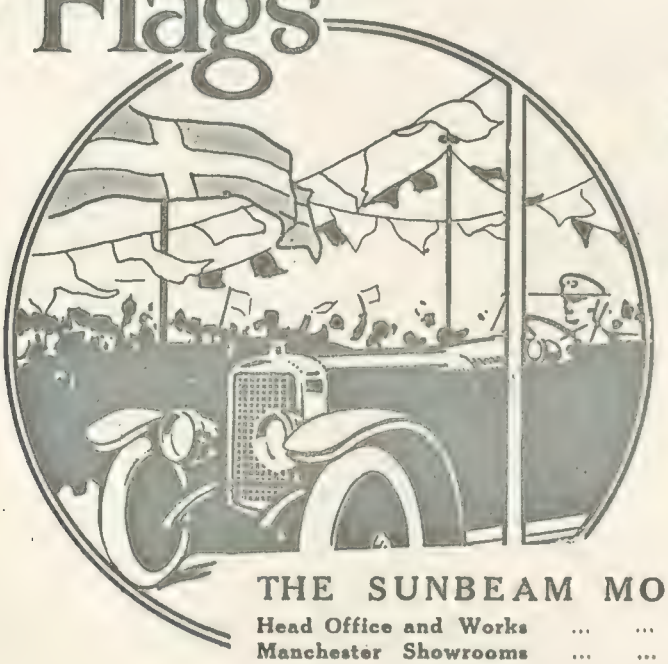
DARK nights, dark days, dark streets, dark shop windows—it'll be plenty gloomsome in London this Christmas-time out of doors, and all our open-air activities must be crammed into the few short hours of aired daylight between eleven a.m. and four p.m. Within our walls, however, there's not much sign of war or gloom. The restaurants are always full—but I believe there aren't to be the usual carousals there this Christmas. Decency is very difficult to inject into those with no natural stock of it, but in this connection some faint glimmering of the things that are done—and not done—in war-time does seem to have reached the organisers of this kind of entertainment.

⁂ ⁂

AT the theatres, though, all is as usual, if not more so. As someone's said, really quite *wonderful* how the stage keeps up its spirits and detachment. At a revue the other night I saw thrown down on to the dirt and dust of the stage, just because a lady thereof was leaving (or not leaving, it doesn't matter) scores of baskets and bunches of flowers so horridly costly that one couldn't help reflecting—all that money. . . . . Even a quarter of it would have made

(*Continued on page 60*)

The Time for Flags



THE end of the war will be the time for flags—the end of the war will also herald the return of

SUNBEAM

cars, the post-war models being standardised upon the experience we are gaining to-day. They will be worth waiting for.

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Strong and durable, withstand rough usage without loss of their protective powers.

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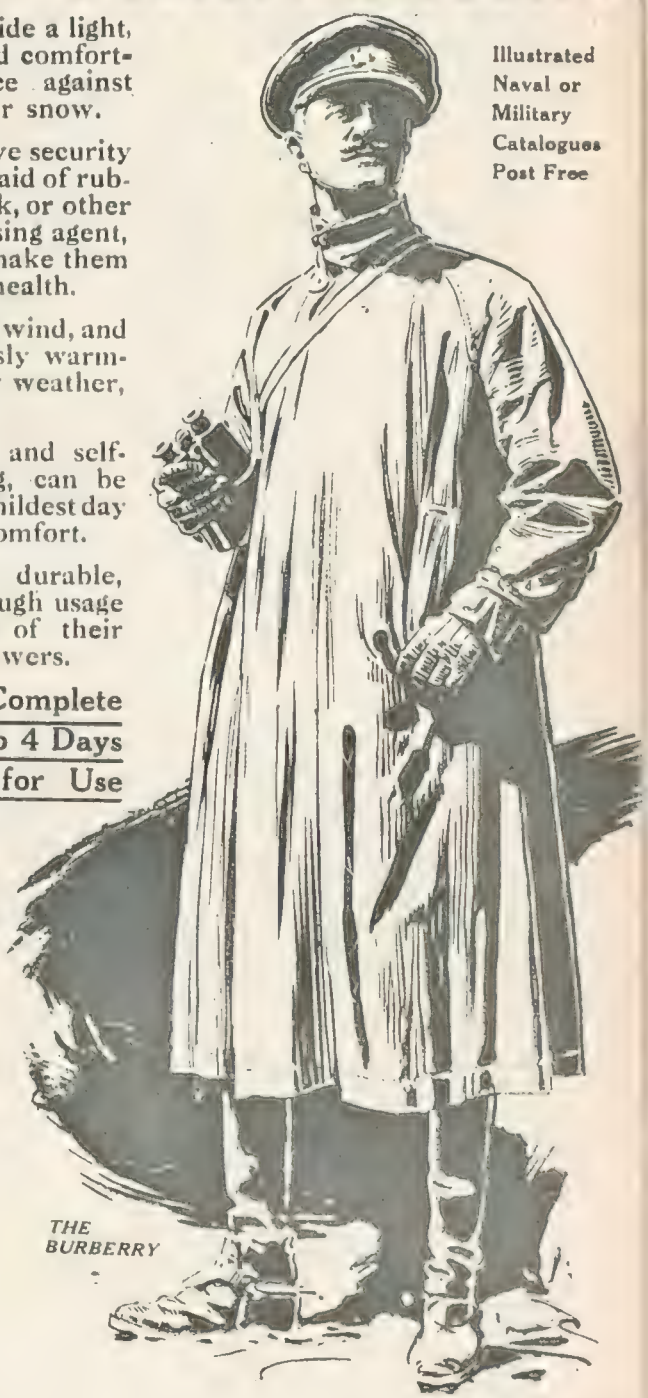

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THE BURBERRY

Its reputation for healthful efficiency is so high, that tens of thousands of Officers wear it in preference to all other weatherproofs, because they know that "The Burberry ensures comfort and security in all weathers."

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"Cold, snow, rain and mud were incessant. I was able to resist the bad weather, brave the cold, sleep on the ground, remain the whole night under rain, WITHOUT GETTING WET, thanks to your overcoat."

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BURBERRYS HAYMARKET LONDON

8 & 10, Boul. Malesherbes PARIS; also Provincial Agents

A XMAS LETTER FROM "BLANCHE" (*concluded from page 58*)

the little-more-and-ah-how-much-it-is to a poor British soldier's widow, if only to give her the kind of "weeds" that make the neighbours gape and the bereaved one very happy.

⚜ ⚜

At the two very newest and *chic*-est and most rushed-after revues no expense has been spared. You'd think we were celebrating a year of plentiful peace instead of one of almost unspeakably bitter and expensive—war. Oh, yes, our third war-Christmas will be quite, *quite* cheery at the theatres, thank you, and there's "panto." as usual, as well as *Peter Pan* and *Alice in Wonderland* and the rest of it for the children.

⚜ ⚜

Who, however, I understand prefer revue now. The cult of the flapper, you see, hasn't exactly made more youthful the tastes of our young daughters. And, as embryo 1920 soldiermen, Eton and the rest can't be expected to stomach unprotesting and undiluted the pale proprieties of mere pure Maskelyne and Devant. "George" expects them at *The Bing Boys* to tell them all about how he stopped, he looked, he listened; how successfully, as best man, he took the bride aside to "jolly her up," got his passport *visèd* at Ciro's, and said: "You *priceless* old thing!"

"Mummy, I wonder what the French pussies say for. 'Miaow'"

⚜ ⚜

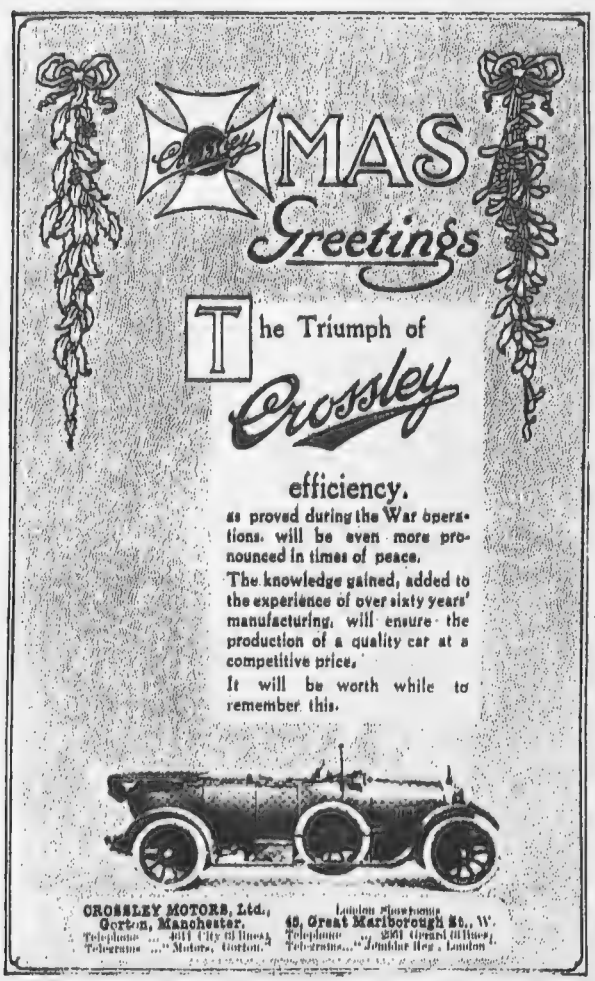
So, you see, all is well, on the surface, in the village this Christmas. The world is still made, quite obviously, for second lieutenants, and though Generals may rave and Bishops rant, he treads the primrose path of dalliance

. . . as care-defying a blade
As ever Bacchus listed.

On leave, that is. Out there he does and dies for England like all the rest of them, khaki, and blue-and-gold, and over-alled. It's great to belong to England, isn't it, when England is at war?

With love, yours ever,

BLANCHE



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The Bazaar contains thousands of Sensible Gifts at prices ranging from 5/- to £5 : 5 : 0

IN the Bazaar you will find the most complete stock of Christmas Gifts at sensible prices in London. Everybody wants to economise this year, but no one wishes to discontinue the charming old customs of Yuletide. The question of expense need not hold you back if you do your Xmas shopping at Waring & Gillow's. Not only the great variety of gifts from which to choose, but also the extremely reasonable nature of the prices asked make a present-buying expedition to our Galleries not only delightful but also extremely profitable.

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Made by permanently disabled Soldiers and Sailors
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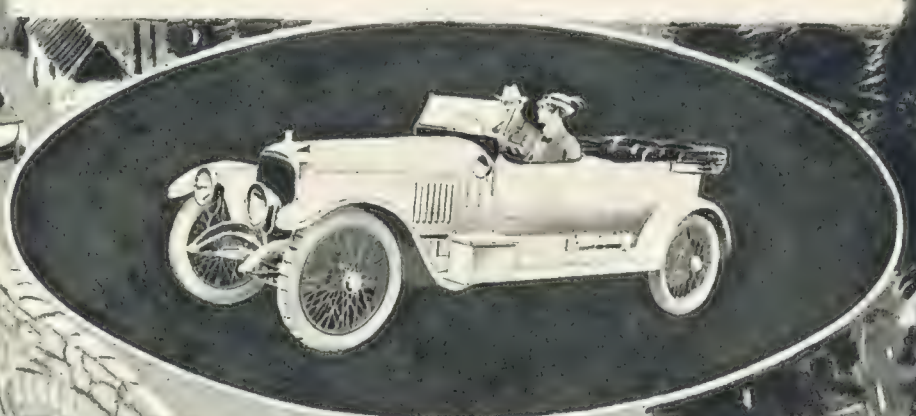
A slogan from the Front:
"The finest car on active service"

A striking fact for the consideration of buyers of high-grade cars:—

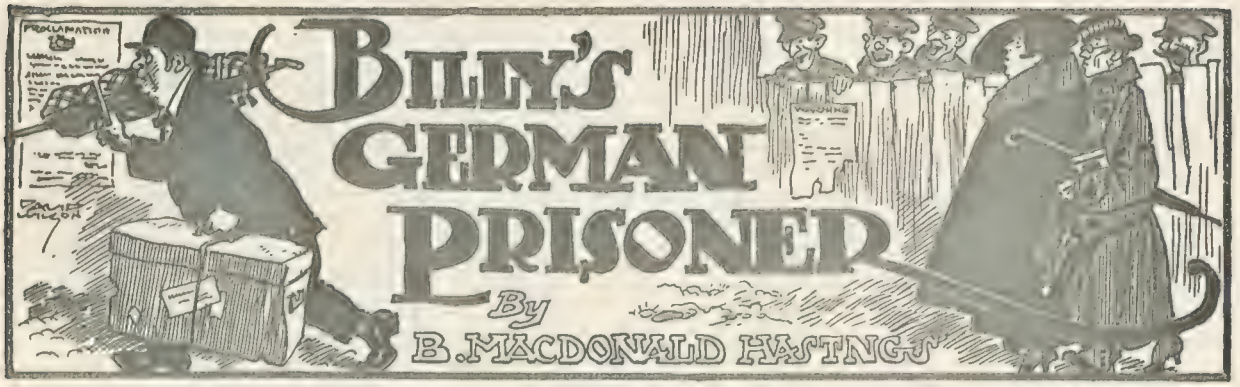
From a well-known motor dealer:
2nd October, 1916.
"From what I have seen myself in France, and from what I gather from a large number of sources, ***your car is giving more general satisfaction than any other make."***

Scores of letters from the front corroborate the above-quoted opinion of an impartial expert.

Vauxhall cars will be ready for sale immediately war work ceases, but our waiting list is steadily growing. orders should be booked now to ensure favourable delivery. Let us send you a catalogue and waiting list particulars



VAUXHALL MOTORS LIMITED



INFINITELY the most popular barrack amusement is that known as "leg-pulling." Scarcely a day passes in the life of a soldier in which he is not concerned in some jest of this order, either as puller or pullee. And if he can effectively and triumphantly "pull the leg" of a civilian he is happy indeed.

Billy was an ex-farmer, a man of sixty, who had retired with a competence which he appeared to carry about with him. There were black and red Bradburys in all Billy's pockets, and he produced them with some self-consciousness to pay for his own drinks. For Billy paid only for his own. Sheltering himself behind the regulations of the Liquor Control Board, notwithstanding the fact that the genial landlord of the "Stag and Stork" ran the risk of allowing "treating" on his premises, he drank in loneliness.

Not that Billy was unpopular with the soldier-patrons of the saloon bar. Billy was a good judge of horses, and often gave most excellent advice. Moreover, he was regarded as a "character," which is always accepted as an excuse for sins of omission. In point of fact Billy was generally liked, and even respected, for his possessions. The British soldier, who never has any money, is reluctant to criticise the actions of men of wealth. Down in his heart there is an uneasy consciousness that if he were in like case he would shortly reduce himself to a nervous wreck.

Therefore, in the midday and evening hours wherein a benevolent Government allows beer to be consumed, the military party in the saloon of the "Stag and Stork" always had a welcome for fat and prosperous Billy, a favour which he as a civilian mightily appreciated.

Now no one had ever tried "leg-pulling" on Billy before. Why, it would be difficult to surmise. Perhaps the profundity of his knowledge of past racing history—he could tell you the names of the placed three for all the "classics" for fifty years back—warned the Tommies that he would be no easy victim. Perhaps reverence for his great possessions had hitherto earned him immunity. Be that as it may, Billy's turn came, and so successful was the operation that, as "Rat" Baker remarked, "he won't want to walk on no stilts for the rest of his natural."

There was a gentle, and yet ominously quiet, atmosphere in the saloon bar that day. It was obvious to a psychologist that most of the company were slightly bored, and that a diversion would be eagerly welcomed by minds at the moment quite passive. In whose brain the idea germinated will never be known. Probably so exact was the level of the great minds of the many great men present that the thing flashed from their respective mentalities simultaneously.

"It's a pretty rotten thing," started "Rat" Baker

"What?" asked Corporal Henry Piper, without looking up from his *Daily Express*.

"I suppose you mean about these German prisoners," commented Sergeant Wilks.

"What's that about German prisoners?" asked fat civilian Billy from his corner.

"You'll be the next to look after 'em," retorted "Rat" Baker.

Up to this point no single member of the party had any idea of the subject of discussion, least of all "Rat" Baker. But at the suggestion that in any conceivable circumstances Billy might have to look after German prisoners, there was a general lifting of heads and a kindling of eyes.

At this juncture Billy made the grave error which landed him in all his troubles. He took the "Rat" seriously.

"How d'ye mean—me look after 'em?" he asked, with a positive anxiety.

From that moment he was lost. If he had laughed and said "Not 'arf!" or "What price me for that job?" he would have escaped. The leg would never have been pulled. But his gravity was irresistible. Simultaneously into the brain of each soldier who was watching his face there flashed full and intimate details of the whole plot.

"Of course, I think it's right, y'know," averred Corporal Piper.

"Everyone's got to do their bit," added Private Sparks.

"And they'd be kind to 'em, see?" continued Sergeant Wilks. "After all, they're only pore soldiers."

Billy turned from one man to the other, his face a delightful study in bewilderment.

"Haven't you heard about it, Billy," innocently inquired a heavily built drummer, known somewhat mysteriously as "Hairpin."

"It's all over the town," said "Rat" Baker.

Then Private Sparks proceeded carefully to put Billy right into his misery.

"It's like this, Billy," he began. "The Government's getting fed-up with all these internment camps. We're taking thousands and thousands of prisoners every day, and that means more and more camps. What does more and more camps mean? More and more men to look after 'em, see?"

"Fellers what ought to be fighting," said Wilks.

"Every man is wanted. You ask 'Aig'," supported the "Rat."

"Well, the Government's going to stop these camps. For the future the German prisoners is to be looked after by civilians over military age."

(Continued on page 64)

"BILLY'S GERMAN PRISONER" (continued from page 63)

The plot was out. Billy's face was very grave. Every man tasted the relish of the game.

"D'you mean," inquired Billy slowly, "that we old buffers has got to get into uniform and go and guard prisoners?"

"Of course not," said Sparks, quickly. "That ain't the idea. I tell you they're abolishin' the camps. See?"

"Abolishing the camps," repeated Billy. "Then where is the prisoners going?"

"Quartered in private houses," says Corporal Piper, quick as lightning.

Billy looked round at the superbly serious faces around him, and then up out of the window. He moved restlessly in his seat, and then called for and drank another four penn'orth of whisky.

"And the nasty thing about it," says "Hairpin," "is that they're going to make a start here. Yes."

"That's right. I see the War Office letter this morning," said Sparks.

"So did I," agreed Sergeant Wilks. "Number 1408 over General Number over 4397. That was the one."

"What did it say?" asked Billy, feverishly.

"Well, I can't repeat the exact words, but what it comes to is this. 'It having come to our attention that soldiers what might be more usefully employed at the front is engaged in guarding prisoners, all the same for the future is to be quartered in private houses.'"

"But why are they starting down here?" The plaintiveness of the inquiry would have wrung tears from the eyes of less brutal men.

"Haven't you seen the German prisoners coming through here every day? Train loads of 'em. They can't leave 'em at the coast, because they might be making plans of the fortifications. So they send 'em inland. This is the first town of any size on the line from the coast, and so they're coming here. It's nice and handy for 'em."

Billy nooded his head, and if possible looked more scared than ever.

"Do you think I'll get one?" at last he asked.

"One!" snorted the "Rat." "You can think yourself lucky if you don't get three or four."

"It all depends on the accommodation," said Sergeant Wilks.

Not a lip was pursed, not a muscle quivered in the whole circle. All were uproariously happy at the success of the plot, but externally they looked like funeral mutes.

"I only got one spare bedroom," pleaded Billy.

"That don't matter," was Sparks's sympathetic comment. "They'll probably put up cots in the sitting-room!"

"Lord love-a-duck!" gasped Billy, peering round, eager to find a smile, some fleeting suggestion that, after all, the ugly story was told in jest. But no succouring flicker came to Billy's aid.

"Of course, mark you," said Sergeant Wilks, "I think it's a fine thing. It gives a chance to these men what's too old for soldiering to do something for King and Country."

"That's all right," said Billy, "but what have we got to do?"

"Well, of course, these fellers will be working on the land all day," said Sparks.

(Continued on page 66)

New Three-Compartment Top Lid for Grand Pianos

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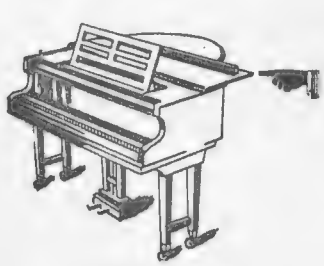

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Trussed !

THE BULGARIAN GOOSE: "How do you think we will spend Christmas?"
THE TURKISH TURKEY: "We must put our trust in Allah!"
THE BULGARIAN GOOSE: "Which À La—'À La Carte' or 'À La Russe'?"

"BILLY'S GERMAN PRISONER" (continued from page 66)

The poor man's anguish was visible, and one or two of his tormentors began to feel that perhaps he had suffered enough. But at the moment there entered an enormous sergeant of the Stagshire Regiment, one Holpey by name. At all costs Holpey must be allowed a spoonful of this feast of fun.

"Morning, Holpey," said Sergeant Wilks. "Bit off about these German prisoners bein' quartered on civilians, ain't it?"

"Oh, ah!" said Holpey, his eye searching furtively round. He had scented some sport, but could not see the quarry yet.

"We was tellin' Billy he might get two or three to look after."

"Oh, ah! Yes, very likely. Just the feller. You'll 'ave two or three. Might be more. My brother got six!"

This was a trifle too much! Holpey had no right to take control of the joke in such a barefaced manner. Therefore the circle protested vigorously. Why, the scheme had not started yet. How could Holpey's brother have six prisoners already!

"I tell you," he replied, in superbly ponderous accents, "that the scheme has started—down Pubchester way, where my brother lives.

Billy looked as if he were going to be sick, and went home.

It was three days before we saw him again, and he was sorely missed. Additional terrors had been thought of, and the victim's company was badly wanted. A beautifully typewritten list of regulations had been prepared, well calculated to reduce the ingenuous old chap into a condition of hysteria, and many other artists in the delicate art of "leg-pulling" were daily attendants at the "Stag and Stork" in the hope of participating in the fun.

Next time Billy came, he came, surprising to relate, all wreathed in smiles. This was hardly what the circle expected.

"I hear they've started up Nobham way," at last ventured Corporal Piper.

"Started what?" asked Billy, with a chuckle.

'Why, the house-to-house visitation. German prisoners, you know. Looking up the accommodation. There's a bloke going round checking the rooms and all that, and when he's done he puts a chalk number on the front door, same as ordinary billeting."

Billy laughed aloud.

"I don't care when they come now," he spluttered, "I am full up. I had a chat up home about it, and I got my wife's mother and her sister down for a month. See?" And he laughed till the tears ran from his eyes.

The circle laughed with him and at him. That Billy, with his penchant for economy, should be so easily bluffed into entertaining his mother-in-law and her sister for a month was a right royal score, and his health was drunk, his cunning toasted and his colossal gullibility most noisily appreciated.

It was certainly Billy's day, from one point of view, and most of the tormentors were satisfied that here the joke should end. But not so Sergeant Holpey, whose appetite for this sort of humour was insatiable.

On the morning before the day announced as fixed for the "house-to-house visitation" he came into the saloon bar with a very long face and produced a paper.

(Continued on page 72)

VALAZE

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NEW CHRISTMAS PRESENTS CATALOGUE FORWARDED ON REQUEST.

"BILLY'S GERMAN PRISONER" *(concluded from page 70)*

"I had an idea it would come," he said, sighing heavily.

"It's all on account of this increase in the population here. Some of you people have been coming it a bit strong, y'know, Billy, with your mother-in-law and such like."

"What's wrong, now?" snapped Billy, who had not been having too good a time lately with his mother-in-law.

"It's all this fillin' up houses to escape havin' prisoners what's wrong. You haven't half been a fool, Billy. Read out what the notice says, Sparkey."

Sparks, handing the paper with gingerly respect, read aloud as follows:

"It having been brought to the notice of the G.O.C.-in-C. that civilian householders in the town are filling up with their relatives rooms available for German prisoners in order to escape billeting of same, it is hereby notified that all persons found guilty of the same will be summarily charged for the Defence of the Realm."

"Lord love-a-duck!" ejaculated the horrified Billy. "What's to be done now?"

"Only one thing," says Holpey. "The house-to-house visitation is to-morrow. Get rid of 'em to-day."

"Get rid of 'em. Get rid of my mother-in-law after asking her down for a month. You don't know what you're talking about."

"Then Gawd help you."

"Billy, old son, you must tell her the truth. Tell her you had her down here just to frighten off German prisoners. Tell her she's a ruse."

"She won't go, she won't go," wailed Billy.

"Then poison her," suggested the "Rat."

Discussion followed of a most exciting nature. The suggestions made to the distracted Billy were many and various, and some of them, alas! brutal in the extreme. At a moment when the poor victim was reduced to such a stage of maudlin self-pity that several were on the point of assuaging his fears and revealing the story as a "wash-out," he got a fresh idea.

"Look here," he suddenly demanded. "Who is this feller—the feller who's coming round to examine my rooms?"

"It'll be quarter-master's stores, of course. I know the feller who'll do your street."

"Is he open to a bribe?" said Billy in a hoarse whisper. A gasp of surprise went up, and on some faces there appeared the look of the boy "who's got it" in the chocolate advertisements. "I wouldn't mind going to a quid to get out of this."

A quid! The circle was speechless for sheer admiration of its own genius. This had never been thought of! A whole quid! And out of close-fisted Billy!

"Billy," said Holpey, "it's almost hopeless to offer bribes to anybody in the quarter-master's stores. Almost hopeless. You might get yourself into awful trouble if you was to offer this particular feller a quid. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll see the bloke and I'll do my very best to get him to take thirty bob!"

. . . . . .

On the following morning an orderly (with five shillings in his pocket) inspected Billy's house, and on leaving marked his front door with a large O.

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Merrie Christmas

BY "EFEMERA." *Illustrated by Hill Clarke*

The Annual Ordeal

THE time has come, as the Walrus did *not* say, to talk of Christmas trees. If anything new and original remains to be said on the subject I should be greatly surprised. Tradition will have it that one must make the attempt, and I have no doubt we shall see the usual number of efforts to galvanise the corpse of the Christmas spirit. Perhaps, though, it is not a corpse—it may be only a sort of Rip Van Winkle or an eighth Sleeper of Ephesus.

* *

A Perfect Gorge

A CHRISTMAS League formed with the object of reviving the ancient merriment of this festive season would have its work cut out in these degenerate days, when the gas log has ousted the Yule log and the wassail bowl is replaced to the satisfaction of most people by a magnum of dry champagne. Even the boar's head would arouse but little enthusiasm in comparison with a succulent young turkey stuffed with chestnuts or oysters. There is nothing exciting to the modern appetite in a boar's head or a noble baron of beef. The pudding, to judge from ancient presentments, has shrunk sadly. If we overeat nowadays we do so in moderation. There used to be an eating-house in the woolly West, the tariff of which was as follows: "Dinner, fifty cents. Square meal, seventy-five cents. A perfect gorge, one dollar." We may still achieve the square meal, but the perfect gorge has gone out of fashion. Gorging means too much discomfort to follow.

* *

True Appreciation

ALSO, we no longer revel and drink deep. It is not the usual or the polite thing for gentlemen on the morrow of a dinner-party to be discovered in recumbent positions under the table. The modern hostess would hardly smile upon such exaggerated evidences of appreciation of her wine-cellar. Hospitality has ceased to require so sincere a testimonial. The convivial prowess of our ancestors is not likely to be revived.

* *

Under the Mistletoe

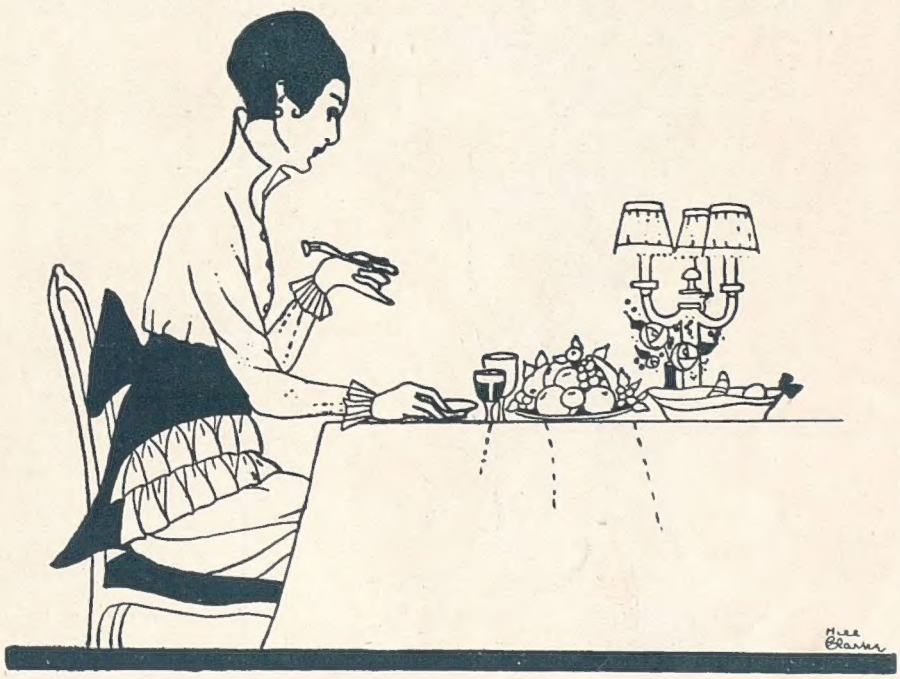
WHEN it comes to jollity we are no less behind hand. A succession of hearty kisses under the mistletoe, such as pleased the not too squeamish damsel of Merrie England, would scarcely meet with the approval of the modern maiden. She prefers the decent seclusion of the conservatory or a dimly lighted sitting-out corner. A good-humoured scuffle in the middle of the hall would offend her dignity and disarrange her toilet. Besides, if the Christmas League were to attempt to revive the ancient glories of the mistletoe it would probably fall foul of watch committees and bishops: a dismal fate.

* *

Possible Revivals

BUT let us suppose that a Christmas League actually succeeded in restoring Christmas customs to

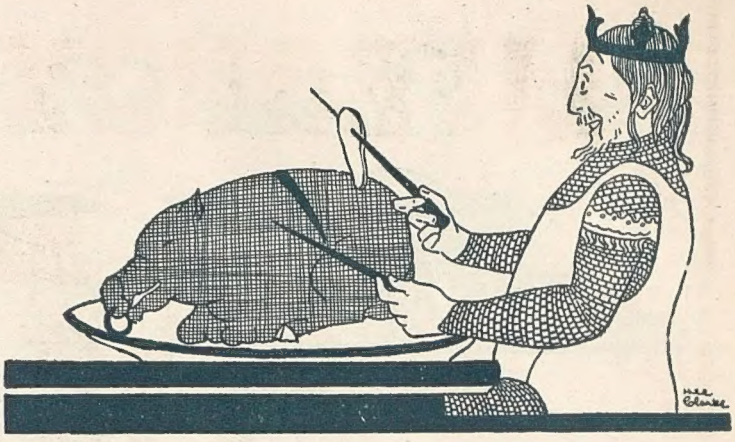
(*Continued on page 76*)



"We no longer revel"

"MERRIE CHRISTMAS" (*continued from page 75*)

favour. We might see bands of counterfeit yokels triumphantly dragging down Piccadilly diminutive Yule logs suited to the proportions of the modern fireplace. The waits would take back from the Salvation Army their usurped prerogatives, and lusty voices bellowing "Good King Wenceslaus" and "God Rest You, Merrie Gentlemen," would again gladden our ears and make night hideous. We should dance with our servants (those who have not left us for the Army or munition factories) in their hall. It is true that the dimensions of the servants' hall in most modern houses would not permit of extended evolutions. Sir Roger de Coverley and round dances would have to be dispensed with in favour of solo step-dancing or stationary writhing of an Oriental nature; but what of that? It is the spirit of the thing that matters.



"The perfect gorge has gone out of fashion"

❄ ❄

Suffer and Be Strong

OUR cooks, our gas-ranges, and our digestions would be severely taxed by the traditional Christmas baked meats, not to mention the lordly dimensions of the pudding, and the prospect of the morning after a night of genuine wassail is enough to strike terror to the stoutest heart; but are we, or are we not, Britons of the bulldog breed? Is not the traditional greatness of our country founded upon the prowess of our ancestors at trencher and bottle?

❄ ❄

Christmas Day

GENTLE reader, ask yourself what bluff King Hal would have thought of a modern Christmas—or Tristram Shandy, or Squire Western. The children's Christmas stockings in the morning, an hour or two on the nursery floor experimenting with the latest designs in mechanical toys, while the children, finger in mouth, look on. Luncheon—a poor thing according

(*Continued on page 78*)

and *I haven't rubbed it* yet!

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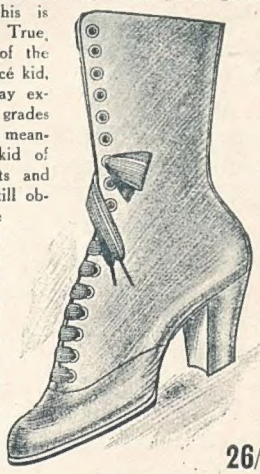

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Send him a Tablet in his next parcel; he will appreciate it.

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"MERRIE CHRISTMAS" (*concluded from page 76*)

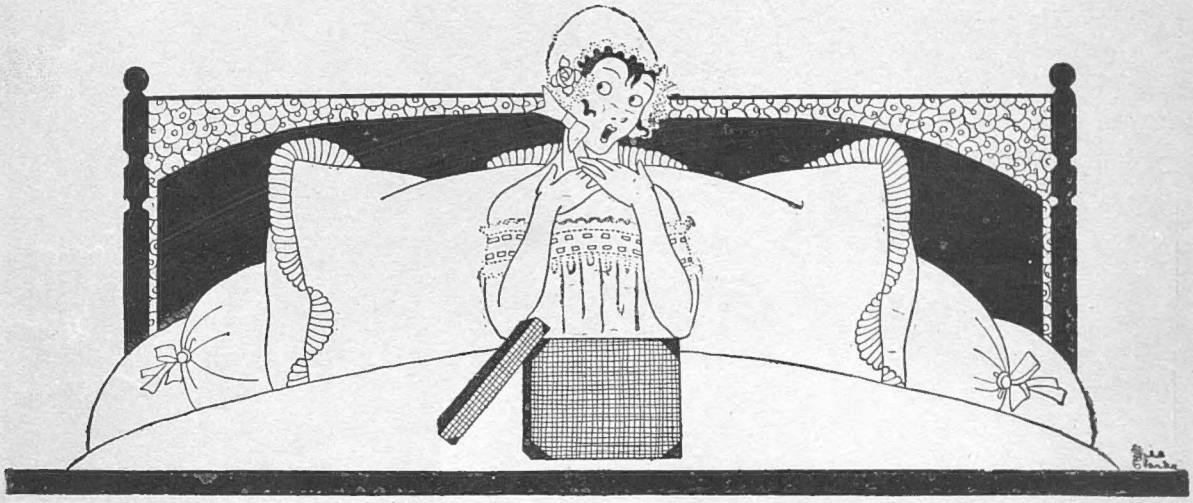
to the hearty appetites of our ancestors. A round of golf, followed by a late dinner, probably in a restaurant, with, perhaps, a dance to follow. And all the time the uncomfortable feeling at the back of one's mind of dissatisfaction with the presents one has received, of misgiving about those one has sent.

❀ ❀

The Exact Science

THE giving of presents is no longer a manifestation of generous good will; it has become an exact science requiring expert discrimination in values. We give in accordance with what we have received or what we hope to receive, and unless one is very careful awful things may happen. A slight oversight, and Cousin Jane may get the lordly gift intended for rich Mrs. Smith, while Mrs. Smith may be left to turn up her nose at the work-bag or pin-cushion that was quite good enough for a poor relation. Or Mrs. Jones, who sent a present last year, may be left out altogether and hopelessly offended. Or, horror of horrors, one may actually, through a slip of memory, send to Mrs. Robinson the identical hideous flower-pot that came with her card the Christmas before. Merrie Christmas, indeed!

EFEMERA



"The identical hideous flower-pot"

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